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THE COUNTY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW, ALBERTA: A STUDY IN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, 1890-1925

by



BODIL J. JENSEN

A THESIS

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65

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The County of Mountain View, Alberta: A Study in Community Development, 1890-1925," submitted by Bodil J. Jensen in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

The basic objective of the thesis is to examine the validity of Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis as it has popularly been thought to apply to Alberta's pattern of settlement. By making a close study of the rural community loosely defined by the boundaries of the present-day County of Mountain View, Alberta, the writer attempts to put the Turnerian thesis in perspective, and to present a more balanced analysis of an aspect of Alberta's initial development. Of prime concern is the social identity of the community which developed in the period from 1890 to 1925.

Chapter I examines the economic development of Mountain View from 1890, first dealing with the pattern of rural settlement geographically and ethnically, and then with the advance of the region from virgin land to an area of productive farms. The three railway centres, Olds, Didsbury and Carstairs, which have a dominant economic and social importance for the region, are treated separately in Chapter II, to pattern their development in relation to each other, and as part of the farm community. Finally in Chapter III, the social patterns of the community, both town and country, are examined with a view to characterizing the overall community identity. In relation to this identity the last chapter gives consideration to the impact of important world and national events which mark the period 1890 to 1925.

PREFACE

This study was originally undertaken for the County of Mountain View for which a separate and less analytical, though not entirely different, manuscript was produced.¹ For the purpose of the thesis an area slightly larger than the county itself is under consideration. This area more nearly conforms to the municipal boundaries prior to 1943. Since administrative boundaries and patterns of social growth do not coincide the additional governmental units involved are not treated in their entirety.

The writer wishes again to thank the county council, and especially the reeve, W. J. Bagnall, for their financial assistance and official sanction. She also thanks the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, which acted as a willing depository and freely opened its own archival files, the library assistants at the Legislative Library in Edmonton where the early Alberta newspapers are stored, and the many private citizens in Mountain View who were willing to share their photos, keepsakes and memories. Many thanks to Mrs. V. Wenger who typed the manuscript, Mrs. W. C. Scarnati who proofread it, and G. Lester, Head Cartographer, Department of Geography, who prepared the maps. Special thanks to Professor L. G. Thomas who has borne with Mountain View from honours essay to master's thesis.

¹Bodil J. Jensen, "Mountain View: A Story of Alberta" (unpublished manuscript, 1971, Provenance: Glenbow-Alberta Institute).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I. RURAL DEVELOPMENT	7
Introduction	7
Patterns of Rural Settlement	9
Agricultural Development	22
Post Settlements	34
II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE RAILWAY TOWNS	56
Introduction	56
Olds	66
Didsbury	86
Carstairs	96
III. DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY IDENTITY	107
Introduction	107
Churches	110
Societies, Clubs, Sports	129
World War One	147
Government	154
CONCLUSION	160
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE	166
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	168
APPENDICES	184

LIST OF TABLES

Table

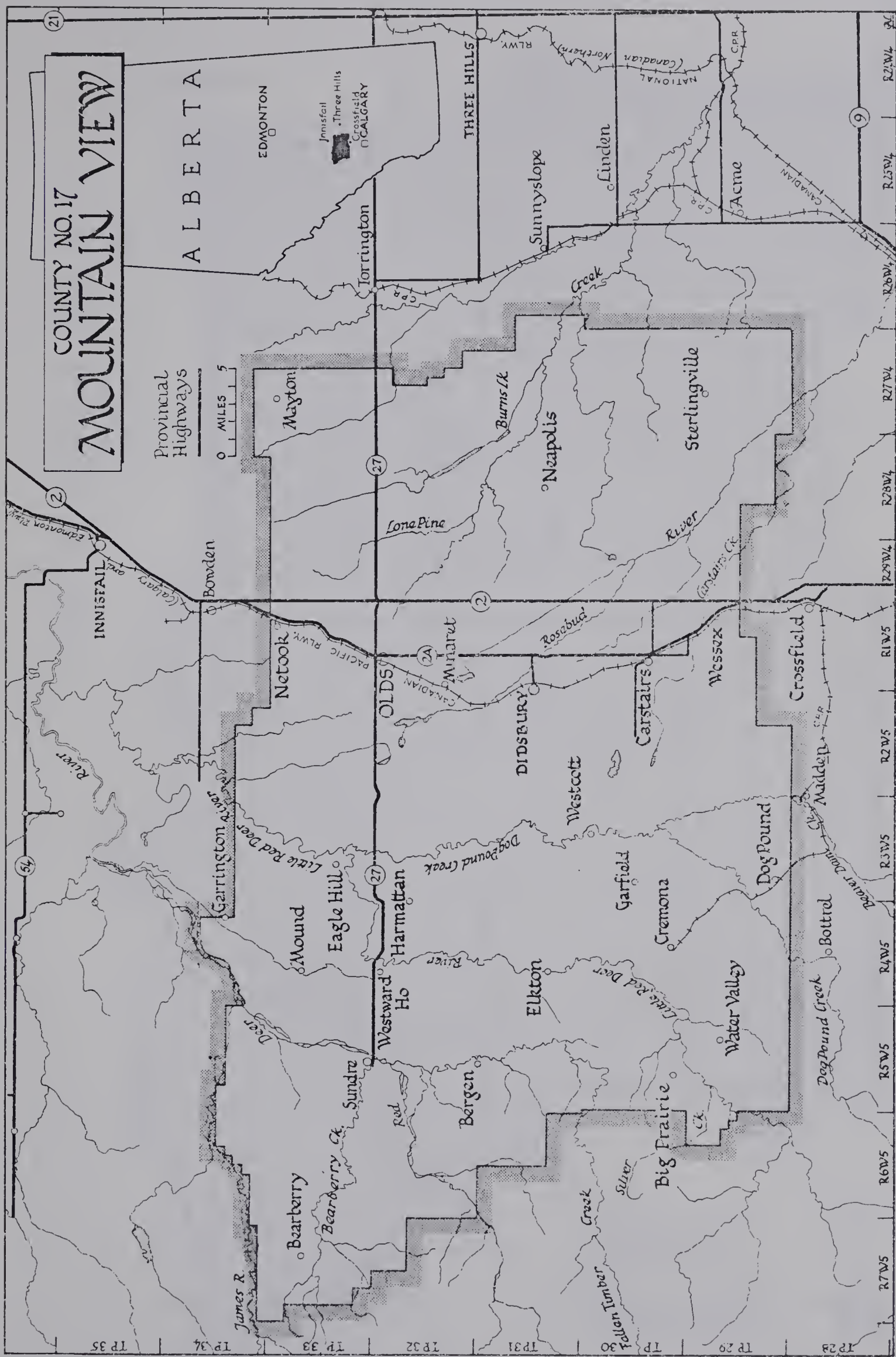
1	District Creameries and Cheese Factories	33
2	Official Post Offices	37

LIST OF MAPS

Map		Page
1	County of Mountain View	1a
2	County of Mountain View, Townships	1b
3	School Districts Circa 1961	38a
4	Formation of School Districts By Year and Number	38b
5	Local Improvement Districts 1912	156a
6	Municipal Divisions	156b

FOOTNOTE ABBREVIATIONS

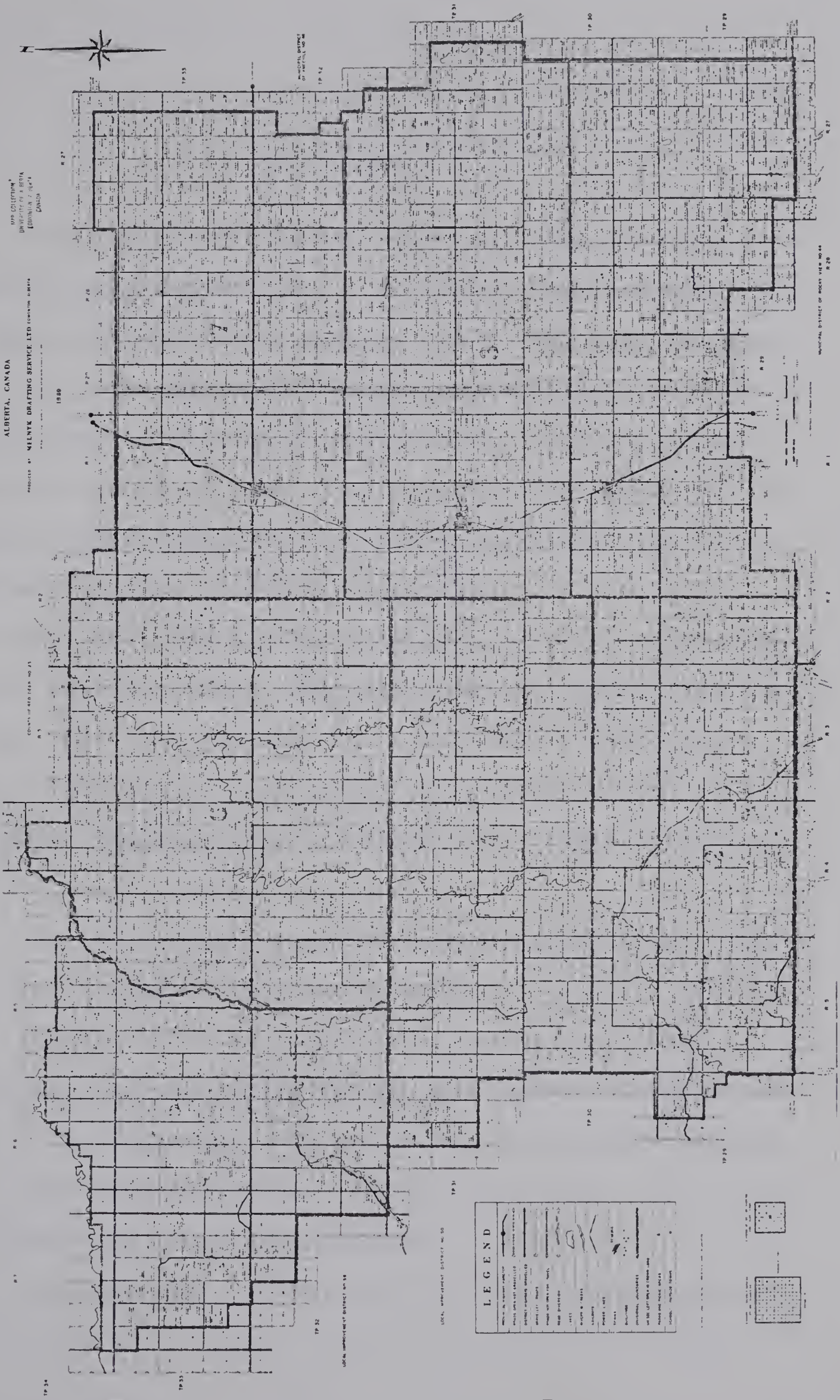
- C.H. Calgary Herald, Day, Month, Year
C.J. Carstairs Journal, Day, Month, Year
C.N. Carstairs News, Day, Month, Year
D.P. Didsbury Pioneer, Day, Month, Year
O.G. Olds Gazette, Day, Month, Year



Map 1

COUNTY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW NO 17

OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY CLERK
MOUNTAIN VIEW NO 17
ALBERTA, CANADA
PRODUCED BY: MOUNTAIN VIEW SERVICE LTD (INCORPORATED)
EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA



LEGEND

Section 36	Section 35	Section 34	Section 33	Section 32	Section 31	Section 30	Section 29	Section 28	Section 27	Section 26	Section 25	Section 24	Section 23	Section 22	Section 21	Section 20	Section 19	Section 18	Section 17	Section 16	Section 15	Section 14	Section 13	Section 12	Section 11	Section 10	Section 9	Section 8	Section 7	Section 6	Section 5	Section 4	Section 3	Section 2	Section 1
Section 36	Section 35	Section 34	Section 33	Section 32	Section 31	Section 30	Section 29	Section 28	Section 27	Section 26	Section 25	Section 24	Section 23	Section 22	Section 21	Section 20	Section 19	Section 18	Section 17	Section 16	Section 15	Section 14	Section 13	Section 12	Section 11	Section 10	Section 9	Section 8	Section 7	Section 6	Section 5	Section 4	Section 3	Section 2	Section 1

INTRODUCTION

The County of Mountain View lies almost halfway between Calgary and Red Deer. On its westernmost limit is the Rocky Mountain Forest Reserve and to the east, the Knee-hill Valley. To the north, Bowden and Innisfail mark the boundary, and to the south, Crossfield. It is an almost rectangular piece of land, a cross-section of Alberta: on the west, heavy timber; to the north, parkland, gradually giving way to open tufted-grass prairie on the southern periphery. The land for the most part is rich, abundantly fertile. The Dog Pound, the Beaverdam, the Little Red Deer, the Lone Pine, the Rosebud, the Carstairs, the Bearberry and the James are part of the Red Deer river system which flows through Mountain View, a region as variegated as its many rivers and creeks.

In the southwest corner, around Cremona, is a land of gently rolling hills, almost foothill country. But the hills, instead of being parched dry, are a lush green, covered with hay and grain fields, and groves of poplar and willow. The farmsteads are maintained with pride--painted barns, gravelled driveways, flower-edged lawns. It is a district which has set high standards.

Further east, across the Dog Pound, the Carstairs

area--flat grasslands and mixed farming, but again the same tidy farmsteads, the same pride in their appearance. To the north ten miles, Didsbury, where the Rosebud and the Lone Pine form deep coulees, but where the land has started to undulate gently, protecting its children against nature's naked strength. Another ten miles, Olds, bordering on the level grain land to the east and on the rolling parkland to the north and west. Then west thirty miles to Sundre, the heart of the wooded area where the farms look less comfortable, less carefully maintained. Only recently has this area approached the bounty of the lands east of the Little Red Deer River.

Mountain View today is an area criss-crossed with roads, dotted with farmsteads. A four-lane highway, Number 2, provides a fast, convenient route to Calgary and Red Deer, though a few miles further west old Number 2, now 2a, still links the main line towns of Carstairs, Didsbury and Olds. These were the three townsites created along the Calgary and Edmonton Railway when it was built in 1890-91. Since then they have grown to towns of over 1,000.

From a signpost and a side-tracked railway car, Olds has become an educational centre housing one of Alberta's most forward-looking Agriculture and Vocational Colleges. It is a town with paved streets, with the occasional row of tall firs, with new housing divisions, a town where consumer industries flourish. Didsbury, almost at the geographic centre of Mountain View, is the county seat, and besides the

government offices, boasts an integrated hospital unit including a nursing home, active treatment and auxiliary hospitals. Many of the streets here too are paved, those in the older section shaded with elms. It is a town which is growing slowly as an administrative centre, with a permanence apparent in its solid brick business section. Carstairs to the south, closest to Calgary, is the smallest of the towns, and until recently was legally classified as a village. Though its development has been slow and for a long period negligible, like its sister towns it caters to the farming community, providing grain storage in the elevators so characteristic of the prairie and services that meet basic consumer needs of the rural population, including recreational facilities and education in its centralized schools.

Thirty miles to the west, along one of the many hard-surfaced district roads in Mountain View, lies Cremona. Nearly hidden around a bend in the road, Cremona is a village which boomed in the thirties but now doubles its population every morning when the school children are bussed in. Five miles southwest of Cremona, almost on the outer fringe of development, is Water Valley, a small service centre initially for the small timber and coal operations. It too developed in the thirties but insufficiently to escape the administrative problems inherent in its status as a hamlet.

Almost due north, but most easily accessible from Olds by highway Number 27, is Sundre, the gateway to the west country. This ambitious, rambunctious boom town knows no

limits to its hopes and prides itself on their prospective realization. A product of the post-World War II oil boom, Sundre has served both the lumber and oil industries. Its hinterland, extending from the James River south to the Fallen Timber and west along the Bearberry, has a wild beauty, strikingly different from the neat and well-ordered farmlands to the east. Yet the Bearberry country is distinctly reminiscent of Cremona's verdure. It is at land's end, on the boundary of the forest reserve, and though the people are fondly called the Bearberrians, the valley shelters a society with a gentleness of its own.

The towns are a product of the land, a land which received the people with grace, with kindness. It was not a land of ill-founded visions, and there were few seasons when Mountain View was a Next Year Country.¹ It was a land where industry and hard work rewarded a man with all he most cherished; a land where hail or frost, too much or too little rain, could destroy a year's crop, but not a farm, not a way of life, not the underlying prosperity. It was and is a land where mixed farming provided a shield against inevitable climatic setbacks and worldwide economic depressions. Today Mountain View is not only a farming community, but an integral part of the Alberta oil industry. Gas plants and oil wells dot the countryside. It is, however, as an agricultural community that the region first developed.

¹Jean Burnet, Next-Year Country (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951).

The County of Mountain View, Number 17, was created in 1961 from the municipal district of the same name which in turn had displaced the M.D. of Dog Pound, Number 280 (See Map 6). Dog Pound was formed in 1943 out of an amalgamation of part or all of the M.D.'s of Rosebud, Waterloo, Stauffer, old Mountain View, Westerdale, Arthur and Poplar Grove. These governmental units had been established in stages after 1912 from the local improvement districts. In 1953 Waterloo municipality across the Red Deer River and a local improvement district to the south were added to complete the rectangle. Though the towns maintained their autonomy, the county administers rural and school affairs, having assumed control over the latter as the more than seventy school districts were phased out and consolidated. The county is, however, an artificial creation, superimposed on an extended and diverse geographic area in a way true to the Canadian tradition of drawing administrative and political boundaries without respect for natural features.

It is as an amalgamation of diverse parts that Mountain View is of interest to the thesis. Travelling through the county and visiting the various centres, one quickly learns that each is a separate community highly jealous of the others. Jealousy is coupled with a surprising lack of knowledge of the more distant areas of the county. Such localized loyalty is also exhibited for the old school districts and the small rural settlements which formerly served as post offices and general stores. Disputes like those

over the building of the Sundre hospital and recent school centralization exemplify the fact that there is no cohesive force binding the county together.² Each of the members of the county council is elected from a subdivision within the county, and is readily accused of being loyal first to that section and only then to the whole. Until 1971 the reeve of the county was a co-opted council member, rather than being elected on a county-wide ballot.

By tracing the development of the region from the initial stages of white settlement in the 1880's through the war years to the mid-twenties, when mechanization changed social patterns, the writer hopes to show rather precisely the roots of this diversity. The disparity may be based simply on geographic and hence to some degree on economic divisions, especially west of the Red Deer River where the soil is very poor. On the other hand it may be based on ethnic and cultural differences which are not bounded merely by topographic features. At the same time, because the influence of the myths of the frontier and the hardy pioneer evidenced in popular tradition cannot be ignored, the initial stages of settlement in Mountain View are extensively examined. By 1925 the period of rapid settlement had passed and a stable, ordered community had emerged. The character of this community as evidenced by the social institutions it supported is discussed in the last chapter.

²The Sundre hospital was built in 1964 after vociferous action by Sundre women's groups. There was a contained riot at the county office in June, 1969 when the Hainstock and Harmattan schools closed.

CHAPTER I

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

As W. L. Morton has pointed out, "Canadian experience, Canadian art, Canadian history, have always suffered and suffer still, from the pioneering trauma, the Cult of the Pioneer."¹ How widespread this ancestor worship is becomes obvious when conducting research into local history. The descendants of the pioneers view their ancestors not merely with the gratitude due the firstcomers to a region that has since become their cherished homeland, but with a profound admiration amounting to awe--the attainment of the seemingly impossible. They focus not only on the feat itself, the transplanting of European civilization to a wilderness, but stress the overwhelming odds against which the pioneers persevered.

The local histories compiled in Mountain View all to a marked degree exemplify this pioneer worship. These family histories are dedicated with such phrases as, ". . . to the pioneers whose courage and hard work established Didsbury and district, and passed it on, a priceless heritage,

¹W. L. Morton, The Shield of Achilles: Le Bouclier d'Achille (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968), p. 332.

to this and future generations."² Implicit in such an approach is a frontier environment of isolation and continual deprivation. This level of popular belief, though not popular belief only, emphasizes the hardships and severe conditions endured for the sake of prosperity and a bright tomorrow. Much of Alberta's history has been left in the hands of local women's groups, and the story of settlement has become a product of local pride, encumbered with popular myths which tend to eulogize individuals at the expense of an analytical overview.

Against this is the traditional scholarly approach which deals with the west as an administrative unit, and only incidentally with the peculiarities of local development. In this approach the history of agrarian settlement in the North-West Territories after 1870 follows the establishment of order. A system of transportation, a framework of government, a means of law enforcement, a policy of land distribution, were part of the western epic before the advent of settlers.

Was Alberta the last best west, the frontier of frontiers³, or is Earl Pomeroy's hypothesis that European civilization was replanted on virgin land without

²Kinette Club of Didsbury, Echoes of an Era (Didsbury: Didsbury Booster, 1969), Dedication.

³W. L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), p. 37.

significant mutation a more reasonable argument?⁴ To answer this question it seems useful to explore the nature and extent of the frontier-pioneer experience of Mountain View. Taking it as a case study, Chapter I examines the actual pattern of settlement for Mountain View both in its geographic and demographic peculiarities; the growth first of agriculture and secondly of the resource industries; and the development of rural settlement centres apart from the railway towns.

PATTERNS OF RURAL SETTLEMENT

The building of a railway marked the beginning of intensive settlement in Mountain View, as it did for all the region between Calgary and Edmonton. The general pattern of settlement was established by the branch line which joined Edmonton to Calgary and the Canadian Pacific. Chartered in 1890 by the federal government, the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, commonly known as the C. & E., reached the fourth, fifth and sixth sidings, later Carstairs, Didsbury and Olds, by October of that year.⁵ Though less than half of each township in Mountain View and in the west generally was available for homesteading, the rest being reserved for school support, the Hudson's Bay Company, the land subsidy

⁴Earl Pomeroy, "Toward a Reorientation of Western History: Continuity and Environment," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. 41 (1954-55), pp. 579-600.

⁵R. A. Christenson, "The Calgary and Edmonton Railway and the Edmonton Bulletin" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1967), p. 112 ff.

granted to the railway companies,⁶ this does not seem to have restricted settlement. From the standpoint of transportation and gaining title, the land was remarkably accessible.

The C. & E. Railway had successfully laid claim to much of the area around Olds, Didsbury and Carstairs, not to mention the three townsites themselves which the railway's agents, Osler, Hammond and Nanton, owned lot by lot.⁷ In granting the land subsidy to the C. & E. the federal government had unwittingly encroached on a grant made previously to the C.P.R. This land reserved for the C.P.R. extended from Calgary as far north as Crossfield and from Edmonton as far south as Innisfail. Hence the only available land "fairly fit for settlement" along the C. & E. route lay between the 28th and 34th townships, which encompassed Mountain View. The C. & E. prudently selected every odd-numbered section to which it was entitled from this strip of townships, before accepting blocs of grazing lands in southern Alberta. Over a third of the 1.8 million acres granted to the company was selected between Innisfail and Crossfield.⁸

⁶A. S. Morton and Chester Martin, History of Prairie Settlement and "Dominion Lands" Policy, Vol. II of Canadian Frontiers of Settlement, edited by W. A. Mackintosh and W. L. G. Joerg (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd., 1938), p. 233 ff. Christenson, "The Calgary and Edmonton Railway and the Edmonton Bulletin," provides a good overview of the railway's history and policies.

⁷Alberta, Land Titles Office, Calgary.

⁸Christenson, "The Calgary and Edmonton Railway and the Edmonton Bulletin," p. 234. The high proportion of railway land selected in Mountain View is more significant for

This railway company and its subsidiary companies have been cited as exemplary of the worst land settlement practices in the prairie provinces.⁹ By refusing to sell the land it held until the value had been raised by improvements made on adjacent homestead quarters, they are reputed to have held back the development of an integrated, compact community, the many unsettled quarters hampering transportation and communication. It is doubtful if such a wholehearted condemnation is deserved. Newspaper accounts would indicate that the land agents for the railway were actively and busily selling the land.¹⁰ In fact the availability of land to which clear title could immediately be obtained may have attracted a certain class of settler with means greater than those of the average homesteader.

Settlement however did not spread in even parallel bands east and west of the railway tracks as it ran through Mountain View. Distance to the railway was only one consideration in choosing a farmsite, topography being of more importance. The Olds area on the fringe of the parkland received

second homestead and pre-emption regulations. Such homesteads were not available in many townships in Mountain View.

⁹James B. Hedges, The Federal Railway Land Subsidy Policy of Canada (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934), p. 123.

¹⁰C.H., 5-4-93 carries this report: Mr. W. H. Nanton, the local representative of Osler, Hammond and Nanton, of Winnipeg, returned last night from Olds, where he had gone to prepare for the reception of the large party of settlers who left for that point yesterday . . . Eighty-one of the total number stopped off at Olds, where they had all previously taken up land purchased from his company. They found

its first settlers soon after the railway was built. These landseekers preferred the verdant creek valleys north and west of Olds which offered security after the dry years of the late eighties. Ten miles further south Didsbury remained a signpost, attracting few settlers to the farmland and none to the townsite until the determined colonization by a group of Ontario Mennonites in 1894. Even then Didsbury remained a small and isolated community, the farmland sparsely settled until the surge in settlement after 1900. Carstairs, ten miles to the south of Didsbury, had to wait for the same wave of post-1900 settlers for even rudimentary development of the townsite. At that time the cycle of wet years in Alberta made the open grasslands in the area attractive for mixed farming, and the demand for free land had increased to such an extent any land no matter what its suitability would have been entered.¹¹

Just as the pattern of settlement can be delineated on a north-south axis, so it can be described following an east-west distribution. The land most accessible to the railway from Olds was naturally settled first, and in 1893 this area was described as being well settled within five miles of Olds, the population of the townsite itself having

ample accommodation in the hotel erected by the C. & E. Railway Co. . . ." The settlers were from Nebraska.

¹¹This statement is more directly applicable to the land west of the Little Red Deer River, than the land in the immediate vicinity of Carstairs which was of high quality soil. The development of the individual railway towns is discussed in detail in Chapter II.

reached 100.¹² Prior to 1900 settlement favoured the many creek and river valleys west and northwest of Olds¹³, which provided water and shelter for stock. A natural barrier to the west was provided by the Little Red Deer River, which marked the transition from willow bushland to heavily forested terrain. When settlement did proceed west of the Little Red after the turn of the century, the river became the demarcation line between the prospering farmer on one side and the backwoods homesteader on the other.¹⁴ West of the Little Red, farms were carved out of the forest in a continuing struggle with nature. Development in the west country, especially in the triangle of land between the James and the Red Deer Rivers, remained at a subsistence level by reason of the great distance to the market centre and the soil type, predominantly grey-wooded and without the productive capacity of the farm lands east of the Little Red. Nevertheless this land was densely settled, homesteaders flocking to the area in large numbers from about 1905. Lured on by the

¹²C.H., 20-9-93.

¹³Alberta, Department of Lands and Forests, Homestead Records. A list of homestead entries for a considerable area north, south, west and east of Olds is found in John Inglis, "The Lone Pine Tree and the District It Centralizes" (unpublished manuscript, microfilm, Glenbow-Alberta Institute), pp. 82-111. Old-timers who were interviewed remarked on the availability of land immediately east of Olds, but their own preference for the land to the west even though in many cases it meant a longer haul to the railway.

¹⁴This demarcation line has application for both the Cremona and Sundre areas, with obvious social implications. People west of the Little Red are derisively referred to as

promise of a railway, many treked west, willing to endure short-term hardship and isolation without realizing that the rosy pictures of the last best west were hardly drawn from their chosen homesteads. The story of the west country is largely tied to resource development, initially of timber and coal, though after World War II oil and gas brought the first measure of general prosperity to the land west of the Little Red Deer.

East of the three railway towns, settlement was rapid after the turn of the century. A few large ranching concerns were built up, finding favourable locations in the broad coulees and open grasslands which marked the east country. Interspersed were communities of farmsteads, made up of group colonists or individual families. Land east of Carstairs, however, did not undergo as close or extensive settlement as the areas to the north. East of the Rosebud River, settlement was light, understandably so in view of the distance to the railway and the unbroken bleakness of the prairie.¹⁵

"jack pine savages" and those to the east as "stubble jumpers". One old-timer remarked that he had never seen a fat man or a fat cow from the west side of the river yet.

¹⁵In one school district, Burnside, the Soldiers' Settlement Board placed thirteen families after World War I, and thereby nearly doubled the population of the district. The suitability of the area for small family farms may be questioned, and was probably the reason for its availability at the time. By 1925 half of the families had given up and located elsewhere. [Interview, Mrs. D. M. Page, Carstairs, July, 1970; see manuscript by Jensen, "Mountain View: A Story of Alberta" (unpublished manuscript, 1971, Provenance: Glenbow-Alberta Institute), p. 157 ff.]

Though the building of the C. & E. pushed settlement forward, pre-railway settlement is not insignificant. Already in the mid-eighties a ranching community had spread along the banks of the Dog Pound and the Beaver Dam. There ranchers were still within reach of Cochrane and the C.P.R., but secure in the creek valleys from the general drought on the prairies.¹⁶ Lack of early records makes an assessment of the Dog Pound community difficult, but indications are that it was an extension of the Cochrane ranching community. Near present day Bottrel, Jean Dartique, a former French instructor, settled on the Dog Pound in 1883 after completing his service with the N.W.M.P.¹⁷ Howard Graves, a New Brunswicker by origin, discovered the location while serving in the militia during the Riel Rebellion and, hauling a house on a hay wagon over the prairie trails from Calgary, he settled with his family at the confluence of the Dog Pound and the Beaver Dam in the late eighties.¹⁸ In the

¹⁶The drought however did affect this area. In the early nineties several of the ranchers to irrigate their crop lands on the flats along the Beaverdam and the Dog Pound enlisted the services of the Mormons from the Cardston area. Apparently several ditches were dug, but the ones used on the Bottrel Ranch and to the north of the English Ranch unfortunately only flooded the crops. Luckily the need passed before further experimentation was necessary (Bruce Hunter, "Autobiography," Cremona Green and Gold).

¹⁷Bruce Hunter, "Autobiography of Bruce Hunter," Cremona Green and Gold, June 15, 1962 (Provenance: Glenbow-Alberta Institute). Hunter settled in the area in 1894. He became secretary-treasurer of the local improvement district when it was established in 1905 and then of the larger municipal district in 1918.

¹⁸Ibid.; M. Weber, "Such Was Life," (Calgary: Times Press Limited, 1956. Provenance: Glenbow-Alberta Institute;

early nineties Henry Burns Atkins set up a ranch on the site of present day Cremona. Atkins was a graduate of a college in England and had come to Cochrane in 1890 to try a "different form of athletics in the nature of ranching."¹⁹ The Brealey Ranch seven miles east of Atkins' functioned as a school of ranching where the inexperienced could learn the rudiments of cowpunching. A number of ranches were run by managers in the owners' absence, including the Bottrel ranch owned by a family of this same name in Montreal.²⁰

The Dog Pound area did not become a self-contained community, lacking even the convenience of a local post office.²¹ Its post office, schools, churches, and stores were products of the homestead era. Even with the change to quarter-section farms after the turn of the century, ranching in the Dog Pound area continued to some extent. Those who could purchased sufficient land for grazing, and a ranch like

Alberta Legislative Library, Edmonton), p. 32.

¹⁹Archibald Oswald MacRae, History of the Province of Alberta, Vol. II (Western Canada History Co., 1912), p. 746. In 1904 Atkins left the ranching life, and settled in Didsbury where he became a leading businessman and active community member. He was elected to the provincial legislature in 1917. See Jensen, "Mountain View," pp. 204-205.

²⁰Hunter, "Autobiography", Cremona Green and Gold. Dog Pound is listed in Henderson's Northwest Territories Gazetteer and Directory, 1900, p. 74.

²¹Bruce Hunter writes of his brother and himself riding in opposite directions from their ranch in hope of meeting someone who had been to Cochrane to collect the mail. (Hunter, "Autobiography," Cremona Green and Gold.) The post office, originally named Bradbourne and later Dog Pound, opened in 1900. (Correspondence, Canada Post Office)

the Graves' continued in the next generation to profit largely from the sale of horses during the First World War. The Virginia Ranch south of Cremona, a consolidation of several of the original ranches, became a polo ranch during the same war.²²

The influence of Cochrane was not limited to the Beaver Dam and Dog Pound Creeks. The drought which made the Cremona area ideal for ranching also pushed forward the development of the Red Deer River flats which became another ranching area prior to the arrival of the homesteaders via the C. & E. In 1894, William Niddrie and his family of half-grown children, and two bachelors, Arthur Fletcher and L. Q. Coleman, settled on the Red Deer River flats north of present day Sundre. They drove their cattle north from Morley in search of water and green pastures, and with the cherished hope of finding range land secure for at least a few years from the advancing homesteader.²³ Across the river on the

²²Interview, Jasper Rodgers, Cremona, July, 1969. Rodgers worked for the owner of the Virginia Ranch, T. B. Jenkins. Essentially the same information as obtained in the interview is found in Cremona Green and Gold (Cremona High School Paper, Provenance: Glenbow-Alberta Institute). February 14, 1962. C.J., 1-6-22.

²³Far from exemplifying a crude and unfettered life-style, the Niddrie family seems to have maintained a marked degree of cultural activity. Though the eldest children were without formal education until their late teens, one became a Latin teacher, and another a leader within municipal government, serving on local boards before being elected to the provincial government. William Niddrie served as a justice of the peace from 1906 to 1921. (O.G., 4-2-21; interview John Niddrie, Edmonton, winter, 1970, 1971; see Jensen, "Mountain View", p. 21ff.

west bank, was the McDougall Ranch which David McDougall operated in conjunction with the family holdings in Morley.²⁴

Except for these two ranching areas, settlement prior to the railway was limited to isolated squatters, and a few colonies which took up land in direct anticipation of the railway.²⁵ In addition two trading posts had been set up on the Calgary-Edmonton Trail as stopping places for the freighters. One on the Rosebud near Carstairs was run by Samuel Scarlett who settled there in 1883,²⁶ and the other, north of Olds where the Morley and Calgary-Edmonton Trails converged, was set up by Jean Baptie Langlais in 1886.²⁷

²⁴The land adjacent to the Red Deer River was subdivided by the surveyors in 1893, while that range east was not subdivided until 1903. Tps. 33-5 W5, 32-6 W5 were surveyed in 1893, but tps. 31-4 W5, 32-4 W5, 33-4 W5 not until 1903 as part of the general scheme of surveying gradually east and west of the C. & E. Railway. (Canada, Department of the Interior, "Report of the Surveyor General," Sessional Papers, No. 13, 1894 and No. 25, 1904). David McDougall sold the north half of 4-33-5 W5 and all of section 6-33-5 W5 in 1909 when the family decided to abandon the Red Deer River holdings (Alberta, Land Titles Office, Calgary.) The account in Olds Old Timers Association, See Olds First (Olds: Old Timers Association), p. 38, is highly exaggerated in regard to the deeded land.

²⁵One such colony of family members was lead by James Murray who settled on the Dog Pound west of Olds in 1889 (Olds Old Timers Association, See Olds First, p. 203).

²⁶C.J., 30-3-06; Carstairs Centennial History Committee, Prairie Trails (Didsbury: Didsbury Booster, 1967), p. 150. Scarlett brought in a herd of Shorthorn cattle in 1886 and built up a substantial ranch which included 400 head of cattle and 250 horses in 1902.

²⁷Inglis, "The Lone Pine Tree," p. 53; C.J., 17-7-08. Langlais seems only briefly to have resided in the area, moving on with the advance of settlement.

Intensive settlement however followed the route provided by the railway, and together the C. & E. and the federal land policy were the catalysts for settlement. An obvious pattern of group settlement emerges especially for the period prior to 1905. These colonies were either loosely bound around old neighbourhood friendships, or more tightly held by ethnic, religious or family ties. After 1905, individual settlement becomes more common, free vacant land around the already settled pockets then being taken, as well as the less desirable land in the west country.

Examples of group settlement are numerous. From Nebraska in 1893 came a large number of colonists including the Samis colony which took up land north west of Olds.²⁸ Another group from Illinois, German in origin, arrived in the Olds area about the same time, and yet another from Michigan.²⁹ The Gilmore colony of eleven families, again from Michigan, had settled west of Olds between the Little Red Deer and the Dog Pound in 1891.³⁰ In 1900 the three Hammer brothers from Missouri settled immediately east of Olds, adjacent homesteads still being available within five miles of Olds to the east, though not to the west.³¹

²⁸C.H., 5-4-93.

²⁹C.H., 24-4-93, 3-10-93.

³⁰Inglis, "The Lone Pine Tree," p. 146 ff; correspondence, Rheo Gilmore, 1969-71.

³¹Interview, Wm. Hammer, Olds, August, 1970.

In 1902 the Poplar Creek district was settled by a group from Iowa, all of whom came from Ida Grove and most of whom were German Lutherans.³² In 1902, west of the Little Red, five families of Norwegians from Minnesota took up land in what was the beginning of a Norwegian influx to the Eagle Hill district.³³ There in the heavy timber these people successfully developed farmsteads, depending on their previous experience with an equally rigorous climate and their skill with a broadaxe and saw to create a living for themselves. A similar settlement of Norwegians in the post-1905 period centred on Bergen.³⁴ Colonies set up in 1902 include that of the Foats from Wisconsin who with some neighbours left the States and settled on the Dog Pound west of Carstairs.³⁵ A little further west, but on the near side of the Little Red Deer the Reid family from Ontario occupied seven quarters.³⁶ Directly west of Eagle Hill in Eagle Valley was a group of North Carolinians, the first coming in 1904 and drawing after them several other families of compatriots.³⁷ Further into the west country along the James

³² Interview, Mrs. Chris Winter, Olds, August, 1969. Mrs. Winter prepared a written statement, as well as answering questions orally.

³³ Articles written by old-timers in O.G., 8-9-55.

³⁴ O.G., 8-9-55; interview, Mrs. Ira Gamble, Mrs. T. Haug, Mrs. Wm. Dougan, Bergen, 28-8-80.

³⁵ Interview, Mrs. Edwin Reid, Cremona, 28-7-69.

³⁶ Cremona Green and Gold, Spring, 1963; interview, Boulter Reid, Cremona, 4-8-69; interview, Mrs. Edwin Reid, Cremona, 28-7-69.

³⁷ Interview, John Niddrie, Edmonton, 27-1-70.

River a group of fifteen Latvian families settled in 1911.³⁸

A major group of colonizers were the Mennonites, with three branches represented in Mountain View. In 1894, under Jacob Y. Shantz 36 settlers, most of them Mennonite Brethren in Christ from Berlin, Ontario, travelled west to settle around Didsbury.³⁹ These original settlers were joined by others of their faith prior to the land boom of the 1900's which ended the Mennonites' semi-isolation and finally initiated the commercial development of Didsbury.⁴⁰ A few old families of Old Mennonites, settled west of Carstairs about the same time as the Brethren in Christ settled near Didsbury, though it was not until 1901 with the coming of other families from Waterloo County, Ontario, that a church was built.⁴¹ East of Olds, near Mayton, another group of Old Mennonites settled after the turn of the century, but left the area before the end of the First World War.⁴²

³⁸O.G., 3-3-11.

³⁹Weber, "Such Was Life," p. 5 ff; Aron Sawatsky, "The Mennonites of Alberta and Their Assimilation," (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1964), p. 27 ff. Not all of the original settlers were Mennonites, William Hunsperger or Huntsperger, being a member of the Evangelical Church. Hunsperger was president of the Didsbury Agricultural Society, a town councillor, justice of the peace, and the postmaster from 1912 to his death in 1922 (Obituary, D.P., 30-8-22).

⁴⁰C.H., 30-3-98.

⁴¹Carstairs Centennial History Committee, Prairie Trails, p. 36; Sawatsky, "The Mennonites in Alberta," p. 27 ff. The account in Prairie Trails seems more authentic than that presented by Mr. Sawatsky.

⁴²Sawatsky, "The Mennonites in Alberta," p. 28 ff.

Another group of nineteen families and some single persons, belonging to the Bergthal Conference, since affiliated with the General Conference, left the West Reserve in southern Manitoba and settled around Didsbury in 1901.⁴³

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

It cannot be denied that the settlers of the early nineties, few in number and usually in scattered pockets, faced a period of hardship. Worldwide depression held back the development of the area, and without a sufficient population base only the most necessary and basic ameliorative steps were taken. However by 1905, and certainly by 1914, there is every evidence that the fledgling communities had advanced to an economic level which could support a comfortable style of life. Moreover the integration of Mountain View into the western economy was by no means a heartbreaking fight first to find a product suitable to the growing conditions of the area, and then to win a way into world markets. The land as it lay in its virgin state provided an instant cash crop, and a means to market was furnished by the railway before the advent of most of the settlers.

The "prairie wool" which for centuries had fed the buffalo offered both feed for local use and a ready export. Wild hay in fact became the staple cash product for the homesteader in the parkland and the prairies, just as lumber did

⁴³ Ibid., p. 37; interview, Peter Neufeld, Didsbury, 20-8-70; C.H., 4-4-01.

for the homesteader in the timbered area in the west country.⁴⁴

The large ranching concerns which predominated in the country east of the railways and in the Cremona area provided a convenient market for the prairie hay. District farmers put up hay on the ranch lands for a fixed price per ton, or sold and hauled their own hay to the winter feed lots.⁴⁵ With the completion of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway in 1898, a new market opened in the British Columbia interior. Olds in fact styled itself the "Hay City of Alberta", and though the wild hay was gradually supplanted by the more productive tame grasses, hay remained an important farm product in Mountain View, in the pre-mechanical era. Nevertheless, mixed farming, not one-crop specialized farms, characterize Mountain View's agricultural growth. Feed grains, oats and barley, came to the fore as the land was cultivated, and a livestock industry, primarily beef and dairy cattle, but also hogs and horses, gradually developed.⁴⁷

⁴⁴C.H., 23-9-91.

⁴⁵Interview, Albert Gaetz, Edmonton, 12-5-70; interview, Charles Fobes, Olds, 31-7-69. Advertisements were carried frequently in the local papers calling for tenders to be submitted for putting up hay. For example, D.P., 10-8-10.

⁴⁶O.G., 8-9-55.

⁴⁷Monthly as well as annual reports on market prices and local railway shipments were carried in the local papers. For example, produce shipped from Carstairs in 1909 amounted to \$702,000 of which grain and hay accounted for \$300,000, livestock for \$300,000, dressed meat for \$51,000 and dairy products for \$51,000 (C.J., 12-3-09); similar statements are found in D.P., 12-1-10, 14-4-15; O.G., 16-12-21; see also

In their own interests the ranchers initially carried the struggling farm economy and together the rancher and the farmer formed a complementary partnership, the one dispensing the needed cash, the other providing the labour for handling the cattle and gathering in the feed.⁴⁸

Pat Burns, a man who epitomizes western development set up a feeder station in 1892 or 1893 about ten miles east of Olds, with Lone Pine Creek as its home base. By 1898 he had a second station, popularly called the South Place, near Burns Lake. After acquiring land at the dissolution of another ranching concern in 1913, Burns had two large holdings of three and five thousand acres, some of it leased, east of Olds. Burns' camps were purely feeder stations and, buying up lots of steers locally and regionally, he allowed the cattle to mature over a winter or summer before shipping them out live to Chicago or his own meat packing plants in Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.⁴⁹

Olds Board of Trade, "Olds - the Best in Alberta" (Olds: Olds Board of Trade, 1912. Pamphlet. Provenance: Library, Alberta Legislature, Edmonton). Shipment from Olds for the fiscal year 1912 amounted to \$832,444, of which cattle accounted for \$442,866, hogs for \$21,792, horses for \$93,750, butter for \$65,400, eggs for \$20,000, milk for \$18,620 and hay for \$160,268 (Olds - the Best in Alberta).

⁴⁸ Some antagonism did build up between the two groups, as for example over the herd laws which some ranchers found too restrictive and some farmers too lax (D.P., 16-2-10, 2-2-10).

⁴⁹ A. F. Sproule, "The Role of Patrick Burns in the Development of Western Canada" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1962), pp. 45-47. Burns Lake was named after the ranching operation.

There were a number of other large ranches, including the Elliott Ranch, eighteen miles east of Didsbury, sold in 1917 for \$50,000. Over a third of the 800 acre ranch was in crop and the Shorthorn herd numbered 250.⁵⁰ East of Carstairs, McDaniel Brothers operated a ranch in addition to acting as shipping agents for the Carstairs area.⁵¹ South-east of Carstairs the High Ranch was purchased in 1914 by Charles Yule and L. A. Bowes, both of Calgary.⁵²

Perhaps the most interesting of these larger ranches is the Reed Ranch, not only because it is fairly documented through newspaper accounts, personal recollections and pictures, but also because it was developed by extensive capital outlay and was to have an enduring significance for the region. Owned by Baxter, Reed and Company from Ida Grove, Iowa, the ranch was located ten miles due east of Olds.⁵³ The company purchased twenty-two and a half sections of land outright in 1901 and specialized in purebred Hereford cattle, Belgian horses and Hackney ponies. In 1902 one thousand Hereford heifers and forty-five registered bulls of the same breed were brought in from Texas, and with further additions through purchase and natural increase the purebred stock reached 250 and the crossbred 5,000 in 1908. By

⁵⁰D.P., 29-8-17.

⁵¹C.J., 1-6-06, 12-11-09.

⁵²C.J., 25-9-14, 23-10-14, 8-1-15.

⁵³J. W. Reed was the active partner in the ranch. James Baxter and he owned a bank in Ida Grove (interview, Charles Fobes, Olds, 31-7-69).

then an estimated \$75,000 had been spent on improvements to the land, in addition to the investment in stock. A 40,000 bushel elevator and a feed mill capable of processing 1,200 bushels of chop daily had been built. The ranch was completely fenced and cross-fenced, and 800 acres were under cultivation. Two sets of farm buildings had been constructed in order to segregate the purebred stock, but the living quarters themselves cannot be considered examples of comfortable ranch life.⁵⁴ The ranch's claim that no other cattle herd in Canada compared in size and quality to that of Baxter and Reed was probably no exaggeration.⁵⁵

The ranch, however, was built for a durability it was not to enjoy. Following a personal dispute the partnership of Baxter and Reed was dissolved in 1912, and Reed took out his money and moved to California. Baxter kept the land, but the stock, both cattle and horses, was auctioned off in a general dispersal sale. Thereupon Pat Burns, who is reported to have bought most of the grade cattle, leased the land until the end of the First World War, when another syndicate from the United States bought it, still as a unit.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Ibid. Mrs. John Wilkinson, wife of the foreman who was Reed's brother-in-law, seems to have preferred town life in Olds to the ranch.

⁵⁵Statistical data is from The Farm and Ranch Review and Grain Growers Gazette, Vol. 4, No. 1 (January, 1908), p. 29 ff; C.H., 19-4-06. The grain elevator, painted turquoise-blue, is still being used and may be seen on the north side of Highway 27 east of Olds.

⁵⁶The holding passed through a series of hands without being subdivided until it was sold in 1928 in farm units to a group of German Baptists (interview, Charles Fobes, 31-7-69; O.G., 8-9-55).

An evaluation of ranches like the Reed Ranch must take into account their social as well as their economic influence on the community. The Reed Ranch controlled over half a township of land in the Olds area, not poor land suited only for grazing but land ideal for grain growing which could have supported small family farms. Undoubtedly the ranch in an area where the boundaries of community and school district generally coincided, must be considered a factor in the formation of socializing patterns though the detrimental effect can easily be exaggerated. Distance to the railway probably inconvenienced the farmers near the ranch to a greater extent than sparsity of settlement between themselves and Olds. Moreover the Reed Ranch stimulated settlement of the Poplar Creek area, east of the ranch, an area on the periphery of Mountain View.⁵⁷ On the other hand intensive settlement so close to Olds would probably have contributed more directly to Olds' consumer service economy. To offset these disadvantages ranches like Reed and Burns depended to a large extent on local labour, and as seasonal employers became an important source of cash for those trying to "prove-up."⁵⁸

The grasslands, ideal for cattle outfits, were also

⁵⁷Eight families from Ida Grove, Iowa settled on Poplar Creek in 1902. One member of the group, L. A. Fobes, was related by marriage to J. W. Reed, one of the ranch owners, and John Wilkinson, the ranch foreman. In addition to homesteading the Fobes family worked for the ranch (interview, Charles Fobes, Olds, 31-7-69; interview, Mrs. Chris Winter, Olds, August, 1969).

⁵⁸Many of those interviewed had spent time working as

suitable for the raising of sheep. Coming later than the cattle ranches, and not as widespread, most of the sheep farms were located around Carstairs. Here again there is evidence of substantial capital investment coming from the United States. In an item carried in the local paper in 1910 an American syndicate is reported to have purchased a large tract of land west of Carstairs with plans to import 2,000 sheep.⁵⁹ In 1910 the Downie family did start a sheep operation on a recently consolidated 960 acre farm a mile east of Carstairs.⁶⁰ By 1914 interest was sufficient to form a Wool Growers Association to promote the sheep industry by encouraging the production of better quality wool, and by lobbying for higher prices. Membership in the association was drawn from the area between Crossfield and Didsbury.⁶¹

cowhands for the ranchers in Mountain View or mentioned selling hay to them. In 1909 Pat Burns was reported to be wintering eight to ten thousand head of cattle east of Olds, requiring 40,000 tons of hay, contracted at about \$10 per ton if wild hay, and \$20 per ton if tame (O.G., 12-11-09; hay prices from C.J. 4-11-10).

⁵⁹C.J., 1-4-10.

⁶⁰Simon Downie and his two sons, Fred and Frank, came from Iowa to Carstairs in 1903-04. Through the firm Simon Downie and Sons, they operated a real estate company and lumber company in Carstairs. Besides sheep the farm was also famous for Shropshire pigs and Hereford cattle (C.J., 23-6-11, 7-7-11, 30-8-12, 4-7-13; Carstairs Centennial History Committee, Prairie Trails, pp. 57-59).

⁶¹C.J., 29-5-14.

The sheep industry, however, was short-lived, the rigour of the Alberta climate, and its predilection for late spring storms, probably being major factors in its demise. If the Downie operation is typical, the winter of 1919-20 dealt a crippling blow, the winter kill itself being substantial, and the drastic drop in livestock prices upsetting any chance for recovery.⁶²

Another branch of the livestock industry, dairying, proved to be an economic mainstay and had increasing significance for Mountain View as the city market in Calgary grew. For the family's own use and for a reasonably steady income a small herd of dairy cows was a sound investment. Though homemade dairy products as well as eggs were commonly used for barter at the local stores, creamery products of standard and reliable quality commanded a higher price.⁶³ The creameries and cheese factories which were built in most districts around 1905 are one measure of overall development in the rural area as well as an indication of improved farming techniques, more sophisticated than that found on supposedly self-sufficient pioneer farmsteads. The processing plants were a focal point for the rural communities, usually operating in conjunction with the local post office and

⁶²The Downie fortunes which had seemed on a secure footing slowly dwindled as a result of this financial loss, and probably the general post-war depression. The farm was sold in 1925 (Carstairs Centennial History Committee, Prairie Trails, pp. 58-59).

⁶³At a time when farm butter brought 13¢ a pound, government butter, that is creamery butter, brought 20-21¢ a pound (Olds Oracle, 16-8-00).

general store. They were however of more enduring success in the railway towns where regular and frequent transportation service helped maintain a steady market,⁶⁴ and where Calgary dairy companies set up local creameries.⁶⁵

The Olds creamery was first discussed in the winter of 1893, but was not actually built until 1895.⁶⁶ Managed on a co-operative basis, it may have proved more of an undertaking than the members anticipated and it was sold within a year to private interests. In 1899 it became one of the government owned creameries and was renamed the Olds Creamery Association.⁶⁷ In 1910 a cheese manufacturing plant was added to the creamery,⁶⁸ and under the boom conditions of wartime another creamery was built by Central Creameries of Calgary.⁶⁹

⁶⁴The train service on the C. & E. at one time had been weekly, was gradually increased to two then three trains a week. Finally it became daily, until in 1906 there were four passenger trains going north and south, in addition to the freight trains (C.J., 1-6-06).

⁶⁵These companies include Carlyle Dairy Company, Central Creameries Limited, and Chrystal Dairy Company. See Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output of Creameries and Cheese Factories" (Microfilm Roll 37, Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta).

⁶⁶C.H., 5-12-93, 5-3-95.

⁶⁷C.H., 13-2-96, 27-4-99; D. Diller, "The Early Economic Development of Alberta, previous to 1905" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1923), p. 132 ff.

⁶⁸O.G., 29-7-10. This creamery changed hands several times, finally becoming a co-operative creamery again before it closed in 1922 (O.G., 26-4-18; Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output").

⁶⁹O.G., 24-11-16, and issues ff.; Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output."

In Didsbury a creamery association may have been organized in 1902, but it is doubtful if a creamery was actually built until 1905.⁷⁰ This creamery, the Clover Hill, was locally owned and prospered sufficiently to add cheese making facilities in 1916.⁷¹ Unfortunately it burned to the ground in 1918 and the money was not found to rebuild.⁷² By that time there were two other creameries in Didsbury, operated by Calgary firms, one a Central Creamery, and the other a Chrystal Dairy Creamery.⁷³ To secure the Calgary milk trade, Didsbury producers formed the Didsbury and District Dairy Association in 1921,⁷⁴ while Olds formed a similar co-operative in 1914.⁷⁵

In Carstairs the first creamery burned down in 1905, but was rebuilt in 1906 after public support was created for the venture.⁷⁶ The Rosebud Creamery closed four years

⁷⁰Edmonton Bulletin, 12-10-07. At the conclusion of the report on the provincial creameries (Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output") there is a history of the Didsbury Creamery which states that the Rosebud Creamery in Didsbury was formed in 1902. However, there is no corroborating evidence; in fact, only contradictory evidence.

⁷¹Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output."

⁷²D.P., 12-6-18.

⁷³D.P., 4-7-17, 29-8-17, 27-3-18; Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output."

⁷⁴D.P., 1-4-14, 7-1-20; Alberta, Department, "Dairy Branch Output."

⁷⁵O.G., 3-4-14.

⁷⁶C.J., 12-1-06, 2-2-06, 9-2-06, 15-6-06.

later.⁷⁷ In 1913 a number of milk producers formed a limited company, and shipped their processed milk and cream to the Hays Dairy in Calgary.⁷⁸ This company too operated only for a short time, the dairy closing in Calgary in 1919. Though dairy products continued to be shipped from the area, a creamery was not re-opened in Carstairs until 1925.⁷⁹

District creameries (Table I) met with varying success. In some cases they were built prematurely without an adequate number of milk suppliers, and in others they closed quickly when experienced dairymen were unavailable to continue their operation. The Jersey Creamery north of Murray Valley, the creamery at Sterlingville and the cheese factories at Cremona and Kansas were too near the railway towns to compete with the conveniences they offered. On the other hand creameries more distant from the railway such as the one at Elkton and Mayton were able to sustain themselves

⁷⁷ Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output." The first creamery in Olds was initially called Rosebud (C.H., 13-2-96, 16-7-00).

⁷⁸ Two members of the Hays family had come from the States to Carstairs in 1905, and most of the other members of the family followed within the next few years. W. H. Hays, and his sons, D. P. Hays, Dr. T. E. Hays, and Claude I. Hays ran a real estate and loan company in Carstairs and by 1910 owned two large dairy farms near Carstairs. In 1913 this family concern was made into a limited company, Hays and Company, with a capital of \$210,000 and comprised of local dairymen, it had its own retail outlet in Calgary. Senator Harry Hays is a son of Dr. T. E. Hays (C.J., 10-11-11, 4-7-13, 2-5-13; Carstairs Centennial History Committee, Prairie Trails, pp. 88-90).

⁷⁹ Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output." Pat Burns and Company opened a cream cooling station in Carstairs in 1922 (C.J., 7-8-22).

TABLE 1

DISTRICT CREAMERIES AND CHEESE FACTORIES^a

Name	Location	Operating Dates
Berlin Creamery	S.E. 19-31-27 W4	1906-1911
Cremona Cheese Factory	Cremona	1906-1910
Elkton Creamery	Elkton	1910-1928
Initial Creamery	Harmattan	1906-1911
Jersey Creamery	S.W. 10-34-2 W5	1905-1906
Kansas Cheese Factory	Kansas (Westcott)	1907
Kneehill Creamery	Sunnyslope	1905-1928
Mayton Mercantile and Creamery Co.	Mayton	1905-1925
Neapolis Creamery	Neapolis	1905-1914
Springfield Creamery	Sterlingville	1907-1909
Water Lily Co-operative Co.	Mound (Derbytown)	1917-present ^b

^aCompiled from: Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output of Creameries and Cheese Factories" (Microfilm Roll 37, Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta), which is a record of Alberta creameries from 1897-1940 and cheese factories from 1906-1940. The opening date of the Cremona Cheese Factory is confirmed by C.J., 5-1-06.

^bWater Lily became the Sundre Co-operative Creamery in 1921. See footnote 81, Chapter I.

until the automobile made practical frequent trips to town.⁸⁰ The distance to Olds, as well as local pride, has probably helped to keep the Sundre Creamery in continuous operation.⁸¹ Berlin and Neapolis were probably too close to each other and to Sunnyslope for three creameries to function economically, and consequently Berlin closed in 1911. Neapolis and Harmattan creameries were destroyed by fire.⁸²

POST SETTLEMENTS

The building of district dairies can be directly correlated with the pattern of rural settlement, and the history of these processing plants closely parallels the history of district centres. By 1905 there were numerous small "post settlements"⁸³ throughout Mountain View, settlements which had grown around a post office and often included one or two stores, a smithy, a church, perhaps a school

⁸⁰The Mayton creamery burned down in 1925 and though it is listed as an operating creamery until that date, the building was used for various other purposes including a car garage prior to the re-opening of the creamery in 1923 (Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output"; O.G., 15-4-21, 20-4-23, 21-3-24).

⁸¹The creamery, opened in 1917, was first located north of Sundre by the old Niddrie Bridge at Derbytown, and then moved to Sundre in 1921, when the name was changed from Water Lily to Sundre Co-operative Creamery (Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output"; O.G., 13-4-17, 8-6-17). See history of Derbytown below.

⁸²Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Dairy Branch Output"; C.J., 11-8-11. The Neapolis Creamery was rebuilt after the Second World War and today specializes in Camembert cheese.

⁸³The term "post settlement" is used in Henderson's

and some other commercial concern. The post settlement was a stepping stone to outside markets; a centre where a farmer could find a blacksmith, if only on set days of the week; where the housewife could purchase or trade for the family's immediate needs; a place to collect mail, to socialize; a community centre. The store might be only as large as the postmaster's front room, but would like most country stores carry one of everything. In most cases the post office was the mainstay of the settlement, drawing customers to the store, and for convenience other services were located in the vicinity.⁸⁴ Serving a radial area of five to ten miles the post settlement crossed the boundaries of the school divisions and, as a centre of social and, to some extent, business activity, provided a focus of loyalty for an area a little larger than the self-centred school district, however parochial it remained. As a convenience to the settlers, the post settlements were spaced at random, the location determined largely by the suitability of terrain and individual ambition. As an intermediary between the farm and outside markets, they were generally located on a direct route to the nearest railway town, possibly old freight trails, newly cut prairie trails, or along a township line.

Northwest Territories Directory and Gazetteer, 1905 to describe these district settlements which grew up around a post office and were without direct railway service.

⁸⁴ By the same token many of these centres could not maintain their social or economic roles when their primary function as mail handlers was taken over by the rural mail route and aggregate mail boxes. See Jensen, "Mountain View," p. 132.

Each of the centres was tributary to one of the railway towns where the local mail as well as the mail orders were first sorted. This was the town where most of the farmers from the post settlement would bring their harvest and where goods not available in the settlement store or from the department store catalogue would be purchased.

Over twenty district post offices were established in Mountain View (see Table II). Some of these centres not only afforded a few basic consumer services, and thus had an important economic function for the district, but also developed an identifiable and distinctive social life. Others simply remained post offices, being too closely spaced to encourage separate development. Sampsonston, Lobley and Mound were conveniently located post offices, while Bearberry and Big Prairie were far enough into the hinterland to support small stores as well as a post office. On the other hand the Westerdale post office, opened in 1910, became part of the general community social development. On a summit overlooking the Dog Pound Valley, a Methodist church was built in 1904 with recreation grounds added after the First World War.⁸⁵

Derbytown lying within the sphere of Olds, has a history that may be taken as typical of the post settlements. The product of one man's ambition it was located on the

⁸⁵Westerdale Willing Workers, A Trail Grows Dim (Calgary: John D. McAra Ltd., 1967), p. 4 ff.

TABLE 2

OFFICIAL POST OFFICES^a

Post Office	Opening Date	Closing Date
Bearberry	1-7-1909	1-4-1968
Bergen	1-11-1907	19-2-1970
Big Prairie	15-11-1910	15-12-1960
Carstairs	1-9-1900	Still Open
Cremona	1-7-1906	Still Open
Didsbury	1-1-1895	Still Open
Dog Pound (Bradbourne)	1-1-1900	10-3-1970
Eagle Hill	1-6-1903	15-8-1963
Elkton	1-6-1907	14-3-1969
Garfield	1-6-1926	1953-1956*
Harmattan	1-8-1908	31-8-1966
Lobley	1-7-1909	22-12-1947
Mayton	1-3-1902	31-10-1932
Mound	1-3-1905	26-9-1958
Murray Valley	1-6-1903	9-2-1927
Netook	15-3-1928	11-4-1958
Olds	1-4-1892	Still Open
Sampsonston	1906	Unknown
Sundre	15-12-1909	Still Open
Water Valley	1-3-1937	Still Open
Westcott (Kansas)	1-8-1908	29-3-1968
Westerdale	1-8-1910	29-2-1932
Westward Ho	1-4-1905	27-2-1970

^aCompiled from information supplied by Canada Post Office.

*Official information is not available to confirm the above date which was gleaned from local knowledge.

township line between the thirty-third and thirty-fourth townships, about twenty-six miles west and slightly north of Olds, on the west bank of the Red Deer River. James W. Dames emigrated from England and settled in the area about 1909.⁸⁶ Previously a store had been run, not too successfully, near the bridge which crossed the Red Deer River by the Niddrie-Fletcher ranches. Dames set up his own store and may have had a post office, and with his friendly and commanding personality succeeded in making Derbytown the centre for Eagle Valley, James River and McDougal Flat district.⁸⁷ By this time settlement in the vicinity of the Red Deer River had moved apace and the Eagle Valley school had been built, while the Rockwood and McDougal Flat school districts were organized in 1910.⁸⁸ Eventually a livery barn and a community hall were built near Dames' store and though no church was built, religious services were held in the schools.

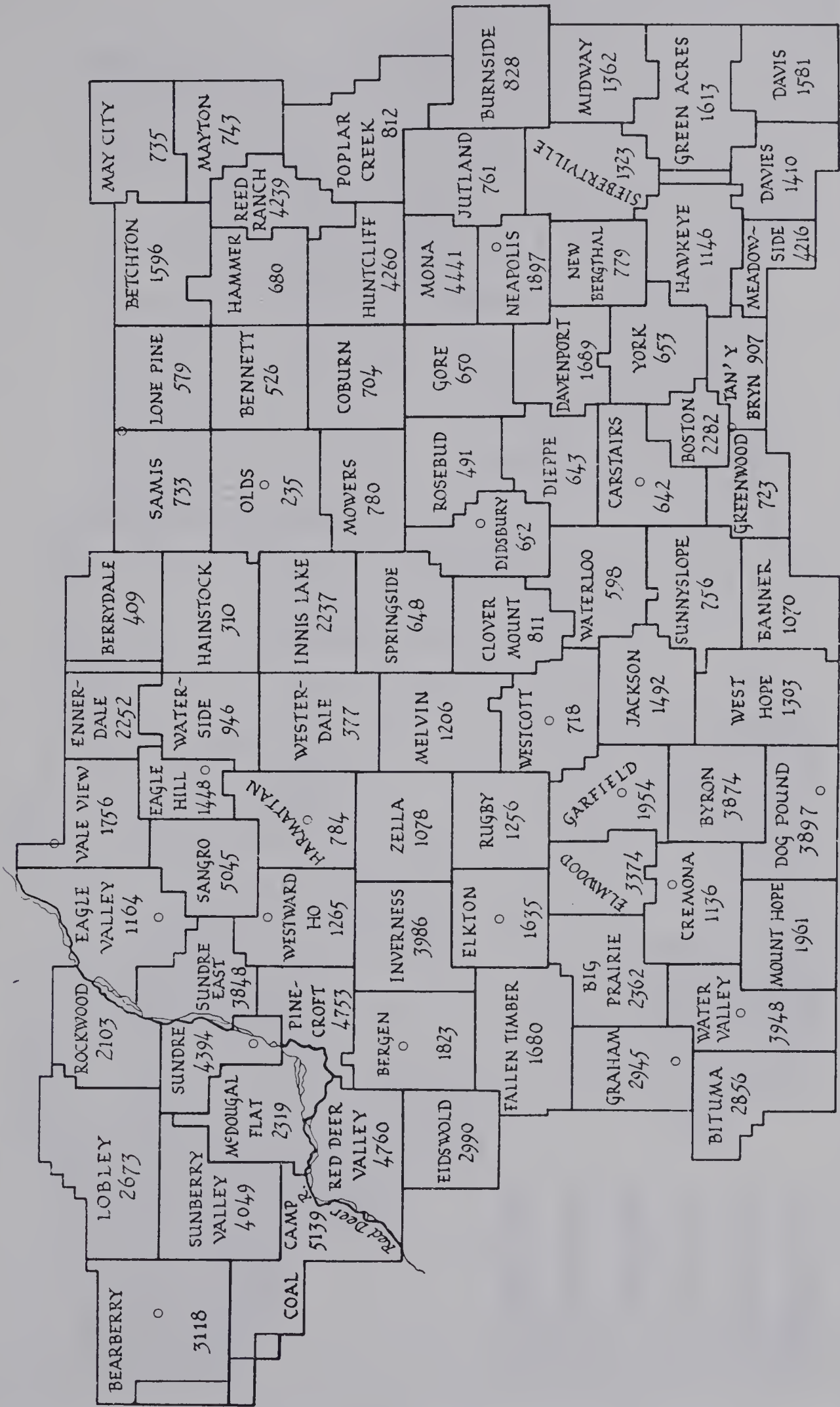
Apparently Derbytown had the potential to remain the sustaining link between the farmers west of the Red Deer River and Olds. The great distance to Olds would seem to have necessitated a small service centre for the Red Deer River area, a centre which should have been able to weather

⁸⁶Obituary of Dames, O.G., 28-5-15; O.G., 11-6-15, 7-1-21, 22-7-21; interview, Edwin Miller, Olds, 16-6-69; interview Martin Overguard, Sundre, 26-6-69; interview, J. G. Niddrie, Edmonton, 27-1-70.

⁸⁷Some centres are not listed by the Postmaster General's office as official post offices, but notwithstanding, settlers could pick up and send mail there. Interview, Mrs. Martin Overguard, Sundre, 26-6-69.

⁸⁸Alberta, Department of Education, List of Schools in County of Mountain View No. 17, 1969. See Map 3 and 4, pages 38a and 38b.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS circa 1961



TP 34

TP 33

TP 32

TP 31

TP 30

TP 29

Map 3

(See Appendix VIII)

R7W5

R6W5

R5W5

R4W5

R3W5

R2W5

R1W5

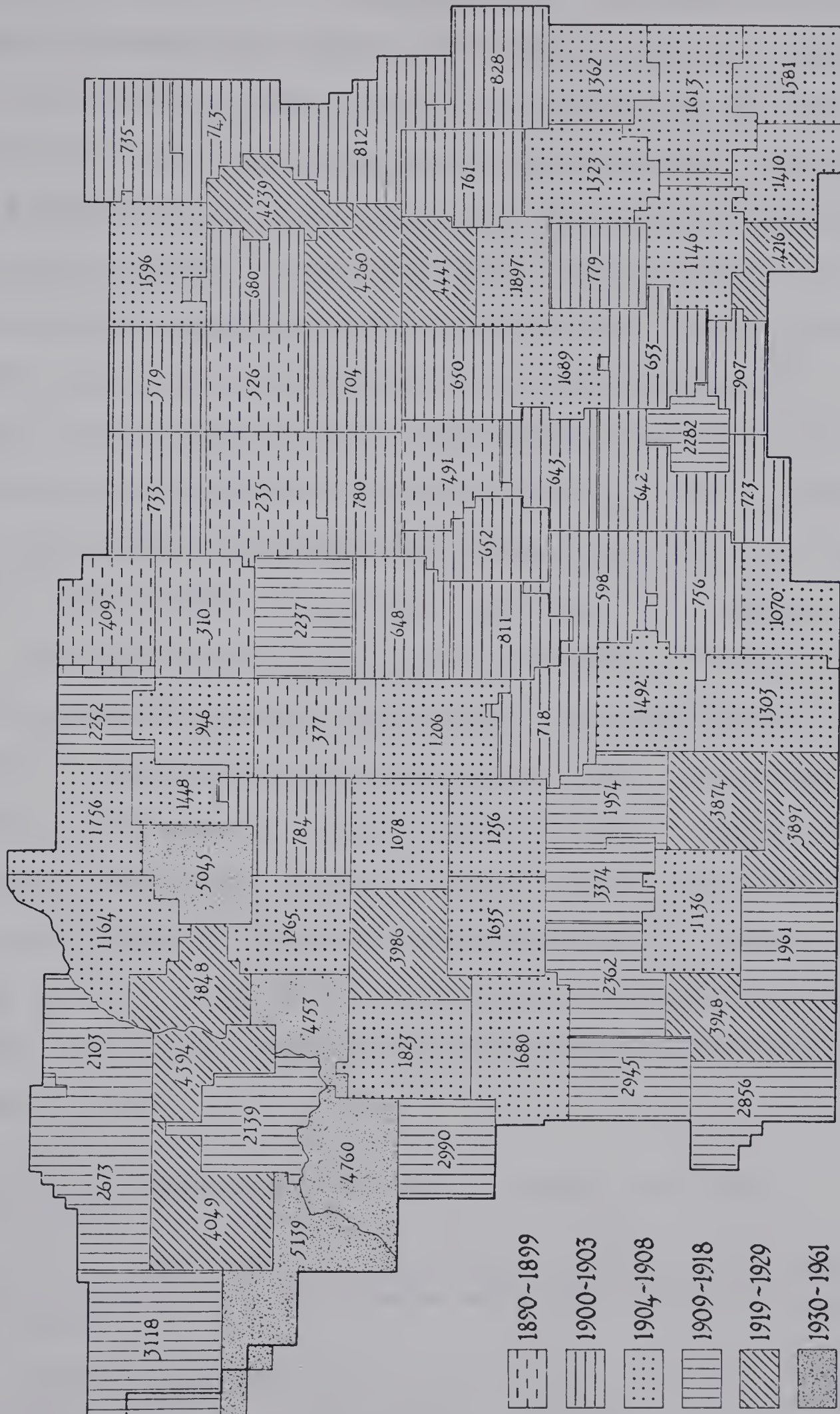
R29W4

R28W4

R27W4

GAL

FORMATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY YEAR



Map 4

(See Appendix VIII)

the coming of motorized transportation. Derbytown was a mid-way point between Olds and the settlement along the James River and Bearberry Creek, north and west of the Red Deer. Unfortunately the site itself was not well chosen. Already in 1914 when Dames marched off to war the shift in the river banks was noticeable. Gravel carried downstream from the Panther and the upper reaches of the Red Deer played havoc with the river bed, as silt did out on the prairies.⁸⁹ Disaster finally came in 1915, when heavy June rains and a late spring thaw broke the log booms on the river and sections of both the Sundre and Derbytown bridges were swept off their piles.⁹⁰ For reasons that remain obscure, the bridge at Sundre, was rebuilt but not that at Derbytown. There a cable ferry was installed after the disaster, and operated as late as 1924.⁹¹ But without the bridge, Derbytown was cut off from Olds, and became a dead end rather than a stepping stone to market. The Yewell family, who had bought the store in 1914, moved to Eagle Hill and opened another.⁹² Slowly year by year the river in its ever-shifting pattern claimed the land, until even the building foundations in Derbytown were under water.

⁸⁹ Interview, Martin Overguard, Sundre, 26-6-69; O.G., 15-8-19.

⁹⁰ D.P., 30-6-15, 21-7-15; O.G., 2-7-15. Every old-timer interviewed from the Sundre area had a story to tell of the flood.

⁹¹ O.G., 23-5-24.

⁹² Interview, Edwin Yewell, Olds, 12-7-69.

It was Sundre, not Derbytown, that became the service centre for the Red Deer River area. Nels T. Hagen, commonly called N. T. Hagen, and Sundre were for many years synonymous. In 1909 when the McDougalls decided to dispose of their holdings near the Red Deer River, Hagen and his partner Peter Lee bought the land.⁹³ Hagen took over the old McDougall trading post, a long rambling log house, and set up a post office-store he called Sundre after his birthplace in Norway. Hagen soon moved to a new store building, one with a large upstairs hall, which was alternately used as sleeping quarters for the lumber men, or as a meeting hall for the community.⁹⁴ In 1919 the hamlet could claim a library, a hotel, and a creamery.⁹⁵

Like the other post settlements, Sundre functioned as a service centre for the farming and ranching community. But it was also, like Sunnyslope and Neapolis, a waystop on the freighting routes. In the Sundre area, as generally in the area west of the Little Red Deer River where the farms provided for many years only subsistence, the exploitation of natural resources played an important though transitory part in development prior to 1925. Timber, coal and oil were

⁹³ Alberta, Land Titles Office, Calgary, N 1/2 of 4-3-5 W5, section 6-33-5 W5. See footnote 24, Chapter I above.

⁹⁴ O.G., 8-9-55.

⁹⁵ O.G., 11-7-19; 8-9-55. The library may have been a project of the Women's Institute, two chapters, the Sundre and Westward Ho W.I.'s being organized in Sundre in 1917. The creamery is the Water Lily at Mound which was moved to Sundre in 1921.

the three natural resources which were to varying degrees exploited in Mountain View in these years. Only the lumber industry met with any marked success, coal being little more than a promoter's hollow vision, and the oil bubble breaking when technology proved inadequate.

The west country with its huge timber stands, the bane of the struggling farmer, supported large and small milling operations. Numerous mills, some on a small scale, others on a more permanent and ambitious level, were set up along the Big and Little Red Deer Rivers and their tributary creeks. The logging concerns provided an economic boost for the newly arrived settlers in the west country, just as the ranches did to the east. Not only were men able to derive a cash income by logging their own land, but they could find seasonal employment in the various camps up and down the rivers.

The Great West Company was the largest outfit to drive logs on the Red Deer River. The company was founded by G. H. Bawtenheimer of Red Deer in 1900, and ran a series of camps along the Red Deer River, perhaps as many as five. The tremendous loss suffered when the flood of 1915 broke the booms on the Red Deer River near Sundre crippled the company, and thereafter its interests were restricted to its mill in the town of Red Deer.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Canada, Department of the Interior, Dominion Lands, "Report of the Inspector of Crown Timber Offices," [Sessional Papers 25, Vol. XXXIX, No. 10 (1905); Vol. XL, No. 11 (1906)].

Further south in the Cremona area, the Shell Lumber Company operated on Stony Creek, and the Silver Creek Lumber Company and McDonald and McNaughton between Silver Creek and the Little Red Deer River.⁹⁷ Numerous other mills supplied local needs and helped the area to build its barns, its granaries, and its frame houses, and to pass from the age of sod roofs and log walls to the comfort of shingles and planed lumber.

Silver Creek was not only a source of timber but the principal coal mining area in Mountain View. In 1905 Simon Downie and Sons, real estate agents in Carstairs, leased legal subdivision 14 in Section 19, 29-5 W5. The mine, number 103, operated intermittently, but bridges were built over the Little Red Deer to make the mine and the nearby lumber mill, owned by McDonald and McNaughton accessible to the public.⁹⁸ Closed for most of 1910, the mine was bought the next year by George H. Knowlton of Vancouver, and thereafter became known as Knowlton's Mines, officially Knowlton Collieries.⁹⁹

The coal camp then grew into a virtual village with the high-sounding name of Knowlton City. There were a storehouse, separate residences for the manager and the pit boss

⁹⁷ Ibid.; C.J., 6-3-08, 5-11-09, 4-11-10; D.P., 12-1-10.

⁹⁸ C.J., 19-1-06, 15-10-09, 5-11-09; Alberta Department of Mines and Minerals, Correspondence File, Coal Mine #103.

⁹⁹ C.J., 7-4-11; Alberta Department of Mines and Minerals, Correspondence File, Coal Mine #103.

and a large rooming house for the miners and buyers. Plans were in the air for a post office, a general store, a school, a gaol and an opera house.¹⁰⁰ It was expected that three mines would shortly be operational, and production was estimated at 800 to 1,000 tons a day. The business centre for the mine was Didsbury, though at one time, before a good government road was built to the Creek, there was a danger that Cochrane would win over Didsbury.¹⁰¹ As part of the bubbling enthusiasm which surrounded the mine the grandiloquent figures of Lord and Lady Huxley and their daughter the Countess Hazelton emerged. Society of this noble calibre was in the Knowlton City style.¹⁰²

The rose-tinted picture of the mine soon faded. The steam coal it produced had never been suitable for domestic use, and Silver Creek was too far in the hinterland to supply the railroad. The mine seems to have closed in April, 1912 over a dispute between management and the miners,¹⁰³ and was entered as "abandoned" in December, 1913.¹⁰⁴ It can be

¹⁰⁰C.J., 12-1-12, 26-1-12, 9-2-12, 31-5-12.

¹⁰¹D.P., 3-4-12, 7-2-12.

¹⁰²The family was probably no more than a figment of creative imagination, providing amusement for the readers of the Carstairs Journal in the winter of 1912. Lord Huxley is reputed to have had a fortune en route from England, large enough to buy Silver Creek, Carstairs and points between. He was granted an honorary doctor of letters by the Big Prairie University for his satiric wit (C.J., 23-2-12 and issues following).

¹⁰³C.J., 7-2-13.

¹⁰⁴Alberta, Department of Mines and Minerals, Correspondence File, Coal Mine #103, letter dated 26-12-13.

supposed that the Knowlton Mines like many others in Alberta was to a large measure a promoter's scheme and that its meteoric development was backed by little more than fast talk and attractive literature.¹⁰⁵

With the same promise of immediate prosperity the oil boom caught the imagination of Mountain View in 1914. Four companies were active in oil exploration, Ottawa Petroleum Products, Monarch Oil, Mountain View Oil and Mount Stephen Oil, and their wells were located in the area south and west of Sundre. Before the crop of 1914 was seeded the news had hit the front page. Monarch Oil Company had signed contracts for drilling eleven wells west of Bergen on part of the 65,000 acres the company controlled.¹⁰⁶ One well was actually started in March of that year, and in June at a depth of 808 feet oil was reported.¹⁰⁷ Soon after the

¹⁰⁵ In 1914 a letter of inquiry was directed to the Mines Branch on behalf of the twelve Vancouver men who had each invested \$1,000 in Knowlton's operation in 1911, with the sure promise of large royalties. The inspector of mines could do little more than inform the investors that the coal was being used only in limited quantity locally without prospects of royalties (Alberta, Department of Mines and Minerals, Correspondence File, Coal Mine #219, letters from P. Van Hulle, 5-10-14, letter to P. Van Hulle, 9-10-14).

¹⁰⁶ D.P., 18-2-14; O.G., 20-2-14.

¹⁰⁷ D.P., 18-3-14; O.G., 22-5-14, 19-6-14; Alberta, Department of Mines and Minerals, Schedule of Wells Drilled for Oil and Gas to 1949 (Calgary: Examiner Press, 1950), p. 183. The well was located in legal subdivision 13 of section 5-32-6 W5, and was abandoned at 3,608 feet.

Monarch well "found" oil, Ottawa Petroleum Products started to drill in the same vicinity. Another group, Mountain View Oil, drilled immediately to the west and, before the end of the summer of 1914, Mount Stephen Oil had also located a well site.¹⁰⁸ It was almost a year, however, before Mount Stephen began to drill, and through the fall of 1915 and the winter of 1916 there was daily expectation of a strike. The well was abandoned in the spring of 1916 at a depth of 4,500 feet, when only gas with some slight trace of oil was found.¹⁰⁹

At the first hint of oil, Mountain View succumbed to boom fever. Every move of the oilmen to and from the train depot, to and from the well sites, was noted with increasing anticipation. There were rumours that the Monarch Well was spiked, but shares went from one dollar to ten dollars almost overnight,¹¹⁰ and as one farm wife from Cremona noted in her diary, "[n]othing these days but oil shares."¹¹¹ A brokerage firm opened in Didsbury with a direct connection to

¹⁰⁸D.P., 10-6-14, 29-7-14. Mountain View drilled in S.E. 1/4 of 11-31-5 W5 and Mount Stephen in legal subdivision 3 of 25-32-7 W5 (Alberta, Department of Mines and Minerals, Schedule of Wells Drilled, p. 183; D.P., 29-7-14).

¹⁰⁹O.G., 17-9-15, 28-1-16, 28-4-16, 12-5-16; Alberta, Department of Mines and Minerals, Schedule of Wells Drilled, pp. 183, 223. George H. Cloakey, one time resident of Olds was the president of Mount Stephen Oil Company (Who's Who, 1917-1918, p. 582).

¹¹⁰O.G., 22-5-14.

¹¹¹Diary of Mrs. Percy Bird (Provenance: Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Bird, Cremona), 25-5-14.

Calgary.¹¹²

It was of course a hollow boom, soon to pass, leaving worthless paper stocks and broken dreams. If indeed the wells had produced and were not spiked as some claimed, oil development in Mountain View had to wait another quarter century when technology had advanced to tackle the problems of deep drilling and when the world's demand for the wonder fuel had grown apace. Although productive wells were later located in the same general area, 1914 did not see the birth of the oil industry in Mountain View.

Sundre remained a hamlet. Without good roads to market, and without the economic support derived from a fertile farm area, there was little that could have pushed Sundre beyond the confines of a post settlement, and it remained largely dependent on Olds.¹¹³ But Sundre was one post settlement that did grow to a town. Though the early oil boom died, and the lumbering operations fell off, Sundre grew in response to the consumer demands of post-World War II oil developers.¹¹⁴

¹¹²D.P., 20-5-14, 8-7-14.

¹¹³The correspondent from Sunberry Valley, always slightly jealous of the Sundre area, made this comment: "There doesn't seem any particular reason why Sundre should grow, but the fact remains that Sundre mainstreet continues to elongate. There are now three new telephone poles and a new store in the village." O.G., 19-10-23.

¹¹⁴Sundre was incorporated as a village in 1950 with a population of 325. It acquired town status in 1956, population in excess of 720. Population in 1971, 948 (C.H., 18-1-50, 25-2-56; Alberta, Department of Municipal Affairs).

Westward Ho post office on the east side of the Little Red Deer River opened in 1905, with a school built nearby. The post office itself moved back and forth across the river from farm to farm in the following years, and Westward Ho did not develop as a permanent settlement until the Second World War. Two church groups, Methodist and Baptist, were organized by 1908.¹¹⁵

Harmattan, a little closer to Olds was a church centre. The post office officially opened in 1908, but seems to have been functioning by 1905 if not before.¹¹⁶ The actual post office moved as the postmaster changed, but during the period the creamery was running a store and an Anglican church, St. George's, were built close by.¹¹⁷ A Seventh Day Adventist church was also built at Harmattan and the Nazarenes first held camp meetings there in the pre-war years.¹¹⁸

North of Harmattan the Eagle Hill post office was opened in 1903 following the arrival of the Norwegian settlers. Together several Norwegians formed the Eagle Hill Saw

¹¹⁵Henderson's Gazetteer and Directory, 1905, 1908, 1914; Sundre Round-Up, 11-1-62.

¹¹⁶Henderson's Gazetteer and Directory, 1905, p. 599.

¹¹⁷The creamery operated between 1906 and 1911 when it burned. The owner of the creamery also ran a store and presumably the post office. See above. The Anglican church was built in 1910, but both Methodist and Anglican congregations were organized prior to 1905 (Olds Oracle, 21-11-02; D.P., 14-12-10; Henderson's Gazetteer and Directory, 1905, p. 599).

¹¹⁸D.P., 17-7-12. A permanent camp is now located north of Harmattan off Highway 27.

Mill Company, and later the Eagle Hill Threshing and Milling Company in 1906.¹¹⁹ In addition to the post office and general store, there was a blacksmith shop.¹²⁰ No church however, was built though some functions were held by the Norwegians to raise funds to build a Lutheran church.¹²¹

Murray Valley, a little closer to Olds, also developed some local industry. Here there was a qualified pork packer, a sawmill, and a blacksmith, as well as the inevitable post-master-storekeeper.¹²²

Eighteen miles east of Olds, Mayton was almost as close to Innisfail. It was however, through Olds that the mail route was tendered.¹²³ The post office and a school of the same name opened in 1902, as well as another school, May City, immediately to the north.¹²⁴ By 1905 there was a Mennonite church, probably Old Mennonite, and a Methodist mission field in Mayton. Business concerns included a general store,

¹¹⁹ Alberta, Alberta Gazette, Vol. 2, No. 6 (1-3-06); Henderson's Gazetteer and Directory, 1905, p. 406; interview, Arnold Ronneberg, Eagle Hill, 25-8-70.

¹²⁰ Henderson's Gazetteer and Directory, 1905, p. 406.

¹²¹ O.G., 13-10-11. Eagle Hill has remained a local service centre, having a co-operative store, co-operatively owned curling rink and memorial hall (O.G., 8-9-55).

¹²² Henderson's Gazetteer and Directory, 1905, p. 793.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 719; O.G., 18-10-18.

¹²⁴ The name was taken from May City, Iowa [Canada, Department of the Interior, Geographic Board of Canada, Place-Names of Alberta (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1928)].

a smithy and the creamery.¹²⁵ Like the centres across the Dog Pound, Mayton was highly inconvenienced by the arduous trip to the railway market town, a downhill-uphill battle with two major coulees en route. Frustrated by the long haul, the Mayton Board of Trade, organized in 1909, agitated for an interurban railway from Olds.¹²⁶

Within the sphere of Didsbury lay Elkton, almost due west of the town on the Little Red Deer River. The settlers in the area represented a mixture of British, American and Scandinavian. Immediately to the west was another Norwegian centre, that of Bergen, though there was also a sizeable proportion of Scots. Both the Elkton and Bergen post offices opened in 1907 and operated in conjunction with a general store. In 1910 a creamery was opened at Elkton and four years later the owner set up a pork packing plant.¹²⁷ Within the heavy timber country, Elkton and Bergen had their own lumber concerns. One of the early mills was run by M. Otterbine, a homesteader near Elkton. Working alone in 1902 with his portable steam engine, he was joined in 1904 by a man named James, and their company held several berths on Stony Creek before going bankrupt in 1907.¹²⁸ There were also several one-man operations, which for a percentage of the lumber

¹²⁵Henderson's Gazetteer and Directory, 1905, p. 719.

¹²⁶O.G., 10-12-09. As drawn in Olds Board of Trade, "Olds - the Best in Alberta," the railway was to run east-west from Sundre to Mayton.

¹²⁷D.P., 4-11-14; 11-4-17.

¹²⁸C.J., 27-3-08, 39-8-07; D.P., 15-10-13; Canada,

milled, cut the timber on individual farms.¹²⁹ In 1913, one mile east of Bergen, on the near side of the bad roads, J. T. Johanneson and Sons set up a mill site and lumber yard. The mill was in turn managed by members of the family, and was still operating in 1921.¹³⁰ The Highland Lumber Company, organized in the early twenties in the Bergen area, seems to have been very small and localized, again dealing directly with the farmer.¹³¹

Located beside the Dog Pound on the township line running between Carstairs and Didsbury, Westcott was also tributary to Didsbury. Westcott more than any other post settlement fostered a unique identity characterized by industry and ambition. The centre was known as Kansas, a name favoured by the Americans in the area, until 1908 when the post office officially opened. By then there were four recognized denominations in the area, Baptist, Catholic, Evangelical and Presbyterian, with a fifth, German Lutheran, soon to be organized. Four churches were actually built, each one two miles from the next, along the east-west township line, with the Presbyterian on the knoll above the river

Department of the Interior, Dominion Lands, "Report of the Inspector of Crown Timber Offices," (Sessional Papers 25, 1905, 1906).

¹²⁹Canada, Department of the Interior, Dominion Lands, "Report of the Inspector of Crown Timber Offices," (Sessional Papers 25, 1905-1920).

¹³⁰D.P., 9-7-13, 22-11-16, 7-4-20, 5-1-21.

¹³¹D.P., 7-1-20, 25-2-20, 7-4-20.

and the others, Baptist, Evangelical and Lutheran east along the road. A school opened in 1902, and soon there were two stores, a cheese factory, a harness shop and a smithy.¹³² The district itself was able to organize to forward its own interests, and in 1907 the Kansas and Didsbury Telephone Company was incorporated, reported to be the first of its kind in Alberta. The line ran through the Westcott district to Didsbury, at a time when rural telephone service was a novelty.¹³³ The community helped support the Westcott-Cremona band, and had its own sports ground where the annual Westcott Sports Day was held.¹³⁴ The event was staged on a more ambitious scale than the usual summer sports day, drawing people from a large area and featuring a lengthy prize list. Westcott was aptly described as a "thrifty little burg".¹³⁵

On the other side of Didsbury was Neapolis, another centre that is not officially listed as a post office.¹³⁶

¹³²The cheese factory called Kansas Cheese Factory, probably operated only one season, 1907. The first store opened with the post office, and the second opened in 1909 and managed without the mail franchise. The harness shop opened in 1907 and the smithy in 1911 (D.P., 8-3-11, 2-10-12; interview, Mrs. John Jacobsen, Didsbury, 8-71; correspondence, Mrs. A. Robertson, Carstairs, 30-10-69).

¹³³Alberta, Alberta Gazette, Vol. 3, No. 24 (31-12-07), p. 9; Edmonton Bulletin, 12-10-07.

¹³⁴D.P., 29-6-10, 6-7-10, 20-7-10, 17-7-12, 7-8-12; interview, Norman Tuggle, Didsbury, August, 1970.

¹³⁵D.P., 29-11-11.

¹³⁶There are, however, isolated newspaper references to a postmaster and his assistant (D.P., 8-6-10).

D. M. Stuart opened a store in 1903 and two years later the creamery.¹³⁷ A little to the north another creamery, called Berlin, opened in 1906, and a post office called Lone Pine is reported to have opened there in 1909.¹³⁸ Though dependent on Didsbury for mail and supplies, the Neapolis community seems to have functioned socially within the orbit of Sunnyslope, a small centre to the east.

Sunnyslope in the Kneehill Valley, twenty-six miles east of Didsbury was the main stopping place on the route to the coal mines at Trochu, Carbon and Drumheller and, for those freighting east from the Didsbury-Carstairs area, it became the halfway house. The post settlement grew into a hamlet with a church, creamery, harness shop, livery barn, blacksmith shop and hotel.¹³⁹ The hotel had no bar and was thus a rarity in the west before prohibition.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless the owners had a thriving business as long as the nearest railway stations were Carstairs and Didsbury. However, once the Canadian Northern was built in 1909 and by-passed Sunnyslope, the hamlet could not sustain its initial growth. Even when the C.P.R. spurline reached Sunnyslope, motor transportation had eliminated the need for a halfway house, and commercially Sunnyslope slowly died.

¹³⁷D.P., 30-10-03.

¹³⁸D.P., 21-4-09.

¹³⁹Henderson's Gazetteer and Directory, 1905, p. 856; D.P., 23-11-10, 12-2-13; interview, Mrs. Agnes Patterson, Didsbury, 31-5-70.

¹⁴⁰The Golden West Hotel in Didsbury was also a temperance hotel (C.H., 8-2-06).

Sterlingville, like Sunnyslope, also waited for the railway only to see it pass a few miles to the east. Due east of Carstairs it was initially named Springfield, as was the creamery which opened in 1907. By 1910, however, the creamery had closed and the centre's name had been changed to Sterlingville, presumably after one of the early settlers. At one time there was a store and a smithy as well as a lodging house, but when the store burned to the ground in 1919, it was not rebuilt and Sterlingville ceased to exist.¹⁴¹

On the other side of Carstairs, Cremona did see the arrival of the long hoped for railway. Located near the Little Red Deer River, on the edge of the fertile farmlands, Cremona became a planned townsite on the spurline which was built northwest from Crossfield in 1930. Prior to that Cremona had been located two miles to the east of the present village site. A post office was established in 1906, the same year the co-operatively owned cheese factory opened.¹⁴² The cheese factory met with little success, and closed again in 1910, the building being used as a high school and a community hall thereafter.¹⁴³ With the arrival of the

¹⁴¹C.J., 14-8-08, 25-6-09, 28-2-19, 4-4-19; Bancroft Women's Institute, The Heritage of Bancroft (Calgary: John D. McAra Ltd., circa 1965), p. 99 ff.

¹⁴²C.J., 5-1-06.

¹⁴³C.J., 7-6-16, 4-8-16. A Cremona Hall Company was formed in 1916 by the people in the district to purchase the creamery building and grounds, and shares could be purchased in the company for five to ten dollars. The building was subsequently moved to the new location of Cremona in 1930 where it still serves as the community hall.

railway, the relocated Dog Pound and Cremona became railway stations, and both centres grew, pushed on by the optimism of businessmen who built on the sure prophecy of the railway. But it proved a short-lived dream when depression forced a halt to extensive railway building. Cremona, instead of being one town on a railway skirting the Rockies to Jasper and then east to Edmonton, became the end of steel. The stores and the grain elevators remained, sustained by local loyalty rather than sound economics.¹⁴⁴

It would appear then that an extended pioneer phase in Mountain View was localized rather than general. Long-term hardships were common in the area west of the Little Red Deer River, and even more so west of the Red Deer River. The other areas of Mountain View quickly passed through the individual self-sufficiency of pioneer days. The land was quickly brought under production through large capital investments and small farm holdings. By 1905 there had developed a definite pattern of community life centred on the post settlements, and in the years prior to the First World War an intensification of this pattern is apparent.

¹⁴⁴The railway was in fact never used with any regularity even immediately after it was built. Cremona was incorporated as a village in 1955 with a population of 180. At that time there were two elevators, three combination hardware-grocery stores, a clothing store, four garages, theatre, pool hall, two cafes, community hall, post office and six-room school (C.H., 7-10-55). Since then a hotel has been built, but many of the stores and services have closed. Cremona now serves as a school centre.

These rural centres are possibly the best indication of the overall development of the farm area on which they were wholly dependent. The railway towns to which they were tributary measure another kind of development. Being entities in their own right and drawing from a larger rural area, they do not as accurately reflect the development in any individual district. However, the post settlements and the railway towns together provide a general picture of Mountain View's emergence from a virgin land.

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF THE RAILWAY TOWNS

INTRODUCTION

A pattern of growth similar to that of the agricultural community is evident in the three railway centres, Olds, Didsbury and Carstairs. Development was limited or non-existent in the period before 1896, had picked up slightly by the turn of the century, and thereafter moved at an accelerated pace. Initially Olds was the only supply centre, serving an area that extended south of Didsbury, as well as east and west. As the land was more evenly settled, and the population of the southerly districts grew, Didsbury was able to function as a service centre as well. Within a short time Carstairs, still further to the south, also developed as a service centre, but unlike Olds and Didsbury was not able to support more than the most essential consumer services. Both Olds and Didsbury, on the other hand, soon duplicated these basic stores and services, and in each town there was a choice of merchants, if not prices. The growth of these two centres, however, is not to be explained in terms of their development as agricultural service centres alone. In the immediate pre-war years, Olds and Didsbury achieved secondary functions. Olds became the site of a

government sponsored agricultural college, and Didsbury of a number of processing plants and secondary consumer services designed to serve a region larger than the immediate farm trading area. While Carstairs remained a village, its absolute growth almost nil,¹ Olds and Didsbury each moved from village to town within the space of ten years, and though they had not the potential to be cities, the steady population increase is one indication of the overall development of these two communities.²

The importance of the secondary roles of Olds and Didsbury should become obvious. There were few natural advantages which affected the location of the townsites on the C. & E., the first consideration being one of distance from the next townsite. Stations along the railway were roughly ten miles apart, a distance which took into account the travel limitations of horse drawn vehicles, and which to some degree ensured an adequate hinterland for supporting a service centre.³ There was no regard given to the

¹Carstairs had acquired a population of nearly three hundred in 1906, and though the population fluctuated from census to census, sometimes decreasing, sometimes increasing, in 1926 the net gain was less than one hundred. Olds and Didsbury on the other hand almost doubled their populations in the same interval. Olds and Didsbury experienced proportionally even growth rates, the population of both towns decreasing over the First World War, Olds more noticeably than Didsbury, a reflection of the ethnic make-up. See Appendices I and IV, and Map 6.

²Olds became a village in 1896 and a town in 1905. Didsbury became a village in 1901 and a town in 1906. (See footnote 81 below and Appendix I.

³There were also sidings midway between the townsites.

availability of a surface water supply, no notice taken of existing cartage routes or settlement points, and in Mountain View the actual sites selected during a dry cycle proved to be less than ideal. With the wet years of the early 1900's sloughs graced each townsite. In effect the townsites were arbitrarily chosen, and the towns were simply planted on the prairie, as necessary adjuncts to the farm community. Their eventual role was likely to be that of small service centres, progressing or floundering as the adjoining farm district experienced fat or lean years.

Along the C. & E. a general pattern emerges, of a fair sized town every twenty miles, and a small town or village every ten. South of Red Deer, Olds and Innisfail were the first to emerge from the anonymity of numbered sidings.⁴ Though both were located in the parkland, which proved at that time to be the most desired farmland, their emergence is probably just as much the result of railway policy, as any natural working of supply and demand. However, in Mountain View itself, the pattern is broken. Didsbury and Olds, ten miles apart, became flourishing centres, and Carstairs which

In Mountain View these were Wessex between Crossfield and Carstairs, Rosebud between Carstairs and Didsbury, Minaret between Didsbury and Olds, and Netook between Olds and Bowden. Netook became a post office during the twenties, but otherwise the sidings were insignificant (Cummins Rural Directory, 1919; Department of the Interior, Homestead Settlement Map, 1908).

⁴The main sidings were numbered north from Calgary, Olds being number 6 and Innisfail number 8. Olds and Innisfail were twenty miles apart. The Olds post office was established April 1, 1892, and Innisfail (Poplar Grove until April 1, 1892), April 1, 1891.

should have played the role Didsbury won, remained a village.

Olds enjoyed a period of growth in advance of Carstairs and Didsbury, and the nucleus of a service centre that was formed in the years prior to 1900 was largely responsible for attracting merchants who came west after that date. Olds for the post-1900 settlement period had the advantage of not being at the undeveloped stage of Didsbury, but still offering adequate opportunity for the establishment of new businesses.

Olds' economy like that of the other railway towns depended on the wellbeing of the area's agriculture. Her steady growth is a direct result of the district's success as a mixed farming area, where crop failures were individual, not general, and occasional rather than cyclical. Though Olds' early prominence is a result of its almost monopolistic position, the close spacing of the railway outlets made competition inevitable. The problem of close spacing was aggravated as the farming community moved beyond horse-drawn vehicles to the speed and mobility of the automobile. With the economic and social changes resulting from a more quickly paced lifestyle, even railway towns would not necessarily retain their vitality simply as service centres. To sustain growth it became necessary to develop some broader economic base. Another stable source of income had to be found.⁵

⁵Gerald Hodge, "The Prediction of Trade Center Viability in the Great Plains," The Regional Science Association Papers, Vol. 15 (1965), pp. 87-115; Saskatchewan, Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life, Report #12, "Service

More by chance than foresight or design Olds was provided with a buffer against the unsettling changes of the post-war era. A government institution, a school of agriculture, was built in Olds in 1913 and, situated in a rich farming area, proved an unequalled success.⁶

Didsbury, on the other hand, tried to provide this buffer through local initiative and did not succeed so well. Though a colony of Mennonites had settled in the area in 1894, Didsbury is a product of post-1900 settlement, prior commercial development being very limited.⁷ With the arrival of a mixture of ethnic groups in the town after 1900, Didsbury first emerges as a service centre. Didsbury then quickly reached Olds' stage of development, and the census figures for the years prior to 1921 reveal no significant population disparity between the two towns.⁸ Several factors would explain this growth, among them Didsbury's position as the trade centre for the fundamentalist church groups in the area. There was a wide variety of churches in Didsbury itself, and though the rural sister churches were not always within what

Centers" (Regina: 1957). Though these studies are related to recent population shifts in rural centres, the principles seem to have application to the change in status of the rural communities both as they initially developed and in the period of mechanization--the change from horse drawn vehicles to automotive transportation.

⁶Alberta, Department of Agriculture, History of the Alberta Agricultural Colleges.

⁷The railway station was built in 1897, while in Olds the railway company had built both a station and hotel (immigrant shed) in 1891 (C.H., 5-4-93, 26-6-97).

⁸See Appendix I.

would be considered Didsbury's natural trading area, religious ties helped to make Didsbury the commercial centre for their districts.⁹ Didsbury moreover was not simply an agricultural service centre but supported several processing and manufacturing plants. Most of these concerns, however, did not survive the economic stress of the depression just prior to World War One. Yet Overall this depression was not a fatal blow to Didsbury. When the major part of the business area burned to the ground on New Year's Day, 1914, there was sufficient capital to rebuild the town, not of lumber, but of brick. Several insurance companies were organized before the war, but these failed, like the small factories, with the post-war depression. Mountain View Bible College was established by the Mennonite Brethren in Christ in 1926, but had not the financial backing to become an important local industry as the school in Olds. Didsbury had nothing to sustain itself but its direct agricultural hinterland, and following the first war, its population remained stable until it like Olds became an institutional centre, and coincidentally a beneficiary of the oil boom.¹⁰

Though it is a local joke that a general fire would have resulted in the same face-lifting that transformed Didsbury, Carstairs would probably not have survived such a

⁹ This is especially true for the Evangelical Association churches and Mennonite Brethren in Christ. See Chapter III.

¹⁰ A district hospital was built in Didsbury in 1944 and has since expanded. In 1961, Didsbury became the county seat,

widespread disaster, but would instead have limped along with severely curtailed services, those who could taking the opportunity to locate elsewhere. The population of Didsbury and Olds was susceptible to the whims of the business cycle, and world events. That of Carstairs remained for a long time at roughly 300.¹¹ There were many factors which curtailed the growth of Carstairs. No store and post office was established until 1900, and further development was remarkably slow until 1905-06 when suddenly twenty businesses and thirty residences were built within a year.¹² Though the initial development was sudden and rapid, part of the surge in western settlement, Carstairs stagnated and, like the other railway centres south to Calgary, remained at a village level.¹³ Village status meant inevitable control by the provincial government, which to some degree provided a safeguard against extravagant spending, but also restricted local initiative. The nearness of Calgary not only affected the number and type of stores and services, but placed Carstairs both federally and provincially in one of the Calgary ridings. Carstairs did not, like Olds, fall under the benevolent eye of a locally elected representative, but was always part

¹¹The drop in population between 1911 and 1916 is a result not only of the general depression, but also of the dislocation of the First World War.

¹²C.J., 7-9-06.

¹³Airdrie and Crossfield are the centres south to Calgary.

of a larger, predominantly urban riding.¹⁴

Proximity to Calgary undoubtedly hampered growth beyond a minimal level, but proximity to Didsbury was probably equally important. Carstairs was not the religious centre Didsbury became, and the fundamentalist groups which settled around Carstairs did not necessarily consider Carstairs as their town. Moreover the capacity of the region to support multi-facility service centres may have been reached before Carstairs was placed on the map. Finally Carstairs, more than Didsbury and Olds, was torn by internal conflicts of which H. W. Wood and the U.F.A. represents only one storm centre, and the religious bickering between the Presbyterians and the Methodists, another.¹⁵ In a village with such a small population base, local improvements would have required the active and continuous co-operation of all elements of the village. Seldom did Carstairs present a united front, either socially or politically.

¹⁴Duncan Marshall, M.P.P. for Olds, was Alberta's Minister of Agriculture when the School of Agriculture was placed in Olds.

¹⁵H. W. Wood did not actually live in Carstairs, but since the Carstairs School District extended to the rural area, he was active in school affairs, as well as other municipal endeavours. He tended to stand for his rights, and arouse general public interest. For example, one school trustee election was declared invalid after Wood, one of the nominees, protested. Whereas eleven votes had been cast in the first election, in which Wood had lost, eighty-four were cast in the second election, fifty-three in favour of Wood (C.J., 21-1-10, 28-1-10, 11-2-10). Partisan politics were never far in the background, and Wood's known views on group government undoubtedly rankled with those who remained in the Liberal Party, such as D. P. Hays, Simon Downie, C. W. Hislop, and H. E. Liesemer (C.J., 8-6-17).

There was indeed nothing specifically attractive about Carstairs, nothing Olds and Didsbury could not match or better. Yet town planning in all three railway centres was virtually identical, following a design standardized by the all-embracing railway company. The two streets which ran on either side of the railway were without exception called Railway Avenue, East or West, and in Olds, Didsbury and Carstairs, it was Railway Avenue West that became the main street. The streets at right angles were called First, Second, Third and Fourth and usually no higher than Fifth, again East or West. Railway crossings were more or less conveniently placed near the railway station and on the outskirts. Other streets were named Osler, Hammond and Nanton after the firm of C.P.R. land agents who seemed to take delight in perpetuating their names throughout the west. Unlike the other centres, Didsbury is remarkable for street names with local significance, Hespeler, Berlin, Waterloo, Hiebert, Liesemer, Shantz and Detwiler.¹⁶ The railway

¹⁶ Many of the names are connected with the original Mennonite colony including Berlin, Waterloo, Hespeler, Shantz and Detwiler. Liesemer and Hiebert were prominent businessmen. In Carstairs, the only local name was Downie, other streets being named after famous Canadians including Minto, Gray and Saunders. In Carstairs the subdivision of Lacknerville had such street names as Palouse, Princeton and Idaho. The owner Daniel Lackner came from Idaho (see below, under Carstairs). Olds lacked personal names, Cloakey being one of the few, but even this was not official (Alberta, Department of Municipal Affairs, Maps of Alberta Townsites; Alberta, Land Titles Office, Calgary, Map of Carstairs subdivision, N.E. 1/4, 8-30-1 W5, 1905).

station, the railway track running through the centre of town, and on either side the railway land which the ambitious used for a park or garden area, and the one-sided main street, typify the common plan of the railway towns.

Yet they were by no means identical. Carstairs fits the stereotyped image of the prairie town dominated by a row of grain elevators. Didsbury after the fire of 1914, at one stroke replaced with brick its falsefronted frame stores. In summer its revivalist camps with their rows of white tents added a unique feature. To the west of Didsbury was the bluff which as a natural grandstand became both the fair grounds and the town park. In Olds the land beside the railway station was fenced off and became an attractive treed park complete with bandshell. The business area in Olds spread along the main street, and out along the side streets, eventually crossing the tracks to the east side where Railway Avenue East became known as Wall Street.¹⁷ Olds developed a residential area first to the west, behind the business area, and then on the east side of the tracks where the more successful and prominent businessmen built their homes along Third Street or the blocks immediately to the north or south, known as Knob Hill. Didsbury and Carstairs also had their select residential areas, but these were subdivisions separated for some years from the townsite proper. As each

¹⁷The name, however inept, was meant to portray the bustle of New York City.

centre had unique physical characteristics, so each developed separate identities which in many respects are brought out by their individual patterns of development.

OLDS

In October, 1890 when the C. & E. railway crew reached Olds, the site was simply known as the sixth siding, one of the many townsites between Calgary and Edmonton chosen and owned by the railway company. Two years later Olds had taken on the characteristics of a service centre, with a railway station house, freight shed and water tank, two general stores, a hardware store, a hotel complete with bar, and a post office which officially opened in April, 1892.¹⁸ Newly arrived settlers had the choice of Olds' one hotel or the immigrant shed, an unpartitioned building of unpainted board which offered the minimum in accommodation and convenience.¹⁹ Like the other buildings in the hamlet, the immigrant shed enjoyed the full advantage of the location: a slough whose bed ran from one side of the railway tracks to the other, submerging the streets on either side during the spring run-off or after a heavy rain. The problem was circumvented by building on stilts, and as later in 1900 when the first buildings were constructed on the east side of the

¹⁸C.H., 11-5-94; photograph, NA-646-3, Glenbow-Alberta Institute.

¹⁹Interview, Fred Duff, Olds, February 21, 1970; Olds Old Timers Association, See Olds First, p. 216.

tracks, the connecting sidewalk was an elevated boardwalk protected by a rope railing.²⁰ In recognition of its size and location, Olds had a sub-agency for the Dominion Lands Office and in 1893 received its own mounted police constable, whose chief duty seems to have been checking prairie fires and stray animals, though serious crimes were not unknown.²¹

Local industry as yet was negligible, though a creamery was started in 1895.²² Even later Olds did not diversify its economic base with industry or small factories, its processing plants being limited to a grist mill and a pork packing plant.²³ That the town was dubbed "Hay City"

²⁰Interview, W. D. Craig, Olds, August 25, 1969; interview, Fred Duff, Olds, February 21, 1970. The railway station was built on stilts not only to raise it above water level, but to bring the loading platform to the same height as the freight car doors. Though the slough was a public hazard, in winter it could be utilized as a skating rink as was noted by the local correspondent to the Calgary Herald: "Fine skating to be had on the lake in front of town. Over half a mile of good clear ice . . ." C.H., 23-11-99).

²¹Public Archives of Canada, NWMP Records, Calgary Monthly Report, April 1893, Record Group 18-A-1, Volume 75, File 127. Celebrated case is the dynamiting and robbing of the Olds post office safe in 1904 (C.H., 21-7-04 and issues following).

²²See Chapter I above. The creamery was financed as a co-operative venture but sold within a year to William Dean and Fenwick W. Frith for \$1,000. Frith initially homesteaded with his wife's family in the Dog Pound area southwest of Olds, and then moved to Olds where he and an associate operated the town's one hotel, St. George's. Dean, on the other hand, had been posted to Olds as a N.W.M.P. constable in 1894 and gradually became part of the business community, owning at various times a lumber yard, hardware store, and the Opera House. He was elected as Olds' first mayor in 1905, but fades from the scene within a decade [C.H., 13-2-96; Inglis, "The Lone Pine Tree," p. 149; correspondence, William Dean, 1952-54 (Provenance: Glenbow-Alberta Institute)].

²³C.H., 16-4-05. The pork packing plant was built by the government.

is perhaps as indicative of Olds' sole function as a market town as it is of the district's primary product. It was indeed not uncommon to see farmers hauling load after load of hay to be stacked on the commons convenient to the railway station. Only one grain elevator graced Olds in 1906, and the second was not built until 1909. The same year the second elevator was built in Olds, four were built in Carstairs, making a total of five for that village. At that time there were already four in Didsbury.²⁴

The future of Olds was as a service centre and this is reflected in the mildly absurd portrayal of Olds as a suitable trade centre on the Klondike goldrush route. If the words of the local correspondent to the Calgary Herald can be taken at face value,

. . . Since Olds woke up . . . it is the most feasible outfitting and starting point for the Peace River and Yukon gold fields . . . Now we may look upon this as a joke, but there are routes to the Klondyke's boom that have not half the advantages . . . Calgary and Olds Klondyke Route! Let her roll!²⁵

This visionary forecast notwithstanding, Olds was a railway point, for the transfer of goods and produce to and from the farmlands. It was not a large terminal or important stopping place on a bustling railway. Its achievements could only be on a modest scale, dependent on local initiative and co-operative effort.

²⁴See Chapter I above.

²⁵C.H., 17-2-98.

Nevertheless the business district of the town grew substantially until in 1906 Railway Avenue from north to south presented one solid front of businesses and stores, with other commercial outlets located on adjacent side streets.²⁶ The make-up of the main street began to change, a few brick or sandstone buildings replacing the standard false-fronted frame structures, as throughout the town masonry was replacing lumber in the public buildings. Similarly large and comfortable multi-storey homes were replacing the modest and utilitarian houses which were first built.

The Merchant's Bank had moved from its temporary quarters in one of the general stores to a new three storey brick building, built by the bank at a cost of \$17,000 in 1904.²⁷ A block north, on the corner of Railway Avenue and 3rd Street, the Victoria Hotel, in the hospitable grandeur of sandstone, was built in 1907.²⁸ A two storey town hall and fire station, also of brick, had by then been constructed on 3rd Street, a few doors west of the Victoria Hotel.²⁹ Earlier, in time for the 1902-03 school term, the one room

²⁶Olds Board of Trade, Olds; photographs, Glenbow-Alberta Institute.

²⁷C.H., 9-6-04.

²⁸O.G., 8-9-55. A few blocks further north on main street, the Alberta Hotel, a frame building, was rebuilt in 1906. It was originally built in 1902 (Olds Oracle, 21-11-02).

²⁹O.G., 11-9-08.

school house had been replaced by a four-room brick building.³⁰ These buildings of brick and sandstone that were slowly changing the face of Olds reflect a belief in its prospects and permanence. The architecture of the town however was by no means novel, the bank, the hotel, the school, and even the town hall being only slight variations of the archetype which was copied in many Alberta towns.

Churches too had become part of the town, their almost identical white frame edifices adding a distinctive element. The Presbyterian and Methodist churches were built in 1900, the Anglican and Roman Catholic in 1902, and the Baptist in 1903.³¹ It would appear, however, that the churches were built for an anticipated rather than an actual membership, and in several cases this projection proved over-optimistic.³² The Methodist and Presbyterian

³⁰C.H., 7-8-02. School district #235 was organized in June, 1892 serving not only Olds, but the rural area immediately adjacent. A plot of land just south of the townsite boundaries was donated for school use, and three hundred dollars were spent on improvements to the grounds and the one room log shack which served as a school. This one roomed school was later hauled to the present school grounds within the town, and replaced by the \$4,000 brick school in 1902. Though there were soon demands for a larger school, another costing \$40,000 was not built until 1913 (O.G., 11-5-07, 18-5-07, 1-8-13, 21-4-60; interview, Fred Shackleton, Olds, 23-8-69).

³¹For a more detailed history of the churches see Chapter III.

³²See Appendix III. In 1911 with a population of 917, two-thirds of the townspeople were either Methodist or Presbyterian. There were 102 Anglicans, 82 Baptists, 70 Lutherans and only 20 Roman Catholics. The proportion remained approximately the same in the 1921 census. Significantly, the Lutherans had not built a church. Rural support

bodies were by far the largest, and they were able to support additional building projects prior to the war.³³ At the other extreme, the Catholic church had very limited use prior to the twenties, visiting priests from Carstairs, Red Deer and Calgary conducting mass on an irregular basis.³⁴ The churches in Olds provided one social structure for the town, fraternal organizations and women's clubs bent on moral reform and prohibition offering another of at least equal importance.

The development of the town was pushed forward by the businessmen in the community. Not surprisingly, the names of many merchants can be found on the roster of the town officials, as indeed this group included a substantial proportion of the town's population.³⁵ The Board of Trade was organized comparatively late in Olds in 1906³⁶, and after a few years of intermittent activity, became dormant.

for an individual church must of course be taken into consideration.

³³The Presbyterians built a new manse in 1909, replacing the one built in 1894. In 1911, the Methodists built a new church in 1911 for \$9,000 [St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Olds, Minutes of Meetings of the Board of Managers, meeting of 17-1-94, 24-8-00 (Provenance: John Ross, Olds); O.G., 17-9-09, 28-1-10, 27-5-21; Methodist Church, Olds, Minutes of the Church Board, Meeting of March, 1911 (Provenance: St. Stephen's College, University of Alberta, Edmonton)].

³⁴O.G., 9-9-10, 27-7-17.

³⁵Roster of mayors and town councillors, Olds Town Office, Olds. This list is substantially correct after 1905, although the history of the hamlet and village is erroneous, pre 1905.

³⁶O.G., 19-4-12.

Two pamphlets were published by the board, "Olds" and "Olds - the Best in Alberta" in 1906 and 1912 respectively, but little or nothing is heard of the board during the war or immediate post-war years.³⁷ This probably signified the passing of the settlement period, and the need to attract newcomers. Other organizations were responsible for individual projects, such as the Agricultural Society which sponsored the annual fair.³⁸ Fraternal lodges could provide the setting for whatever preliminary discussions were needed to initiate most other endeavours. As an organization the Board of Trade was probably redundant, except in its function of public relations and publicity.

Similarly the Boards of Trade in the other communities were not successful in remaining as active organizations, their memberships quickly dwindling. The Board of Trade organized in Didsbury in 1902 met with initial success, and sponsored a succession of monthly street fairs.³⁹ But

³⁷The pamphlets are found in the Library, Alberta Legislature, Edmonton. The board generally met in mid-summer to re-organize, and then died with the first chill of winter. It was re-organized in 1923 (O.G., 5-6-08, 30-7-09, 26-8-10, 6-4-23, 13-4-23).

³⁸The Agricultural Society was organized in 1899, and within six years had acquired a 40 acre exhibition ground, including stables, shed and race track. Starting from a small produce exhibit in the railway station in 1900 or 1901, the fair had grown into an annual event, as part of the Alberta fair circuit. Didsbury, but not Carstairs, was also on the province-wide circuit (C.H., 12-10-99, 19-4-06; O.G., 18-9-08).

³⁹C.H., 6-11-02; D.P., 13-2-03. The fairs were reminiscent of the street markets held in the Mennonite areas in Ontario.

in 1910 the *Pioneer* editor was admonishing the businessmen to re-organize the board in the interests of the town, and when a meeting was called in the late spring, too few attended to re-constitute the board.⁴⁰ In Carstairs, a meeting was called in the fall of 1906 for the purpose of re-organizing the board,⁴¹ but again nothing concrete is heard of its activities until the early twenties when a board of trade was formed to work for a "Bigger, Better and Cleaner Carstairs."⁴² The businessmen worked through other organizations or provided individual leadership in public office, pushing pet projects and with increasing success the community's amenities.

The professional men in Olds, the doctors, lawyers and dentists, formed another group from which leadership could be expected. As the largest centre, and on serving a more extensive and densely populated area, Olds had a larger professional group.⁴³ In 1906, for example, there were three resident doctors, two dentists and a lawyer.⁴⁴ In addition to their professional duties, these men participated

⁴⁰ D.P., 12-1-10, 25-5-10.

⁴¹ C.J., 21-9-06.

⁴² C.J., 20-4-22.

⁴³ The professional cards carried in almost every edition of the local weeklies provide a fairly accurate indication of the relative size of the group in the three railway towns.

⁴⁴ Olds Board of Trade, Olds.

in civic affairs, serving on school boards and the town council.⁴⁵ In their capacity as public health officials, the medical doctors maintained a certain standard of cleanliness within the town and, backed by the town council and its constable, the doctors directed annual spring clean-ups. Delinquents who insisted on using the back alleys as refuse areas were fined accordingly.⁴⁶

The doctors were instrumental in providing a cottage hospital for the town. In 1906, a cottage hospital was operating though this may simply have been a maternity nursing home.⁴⁷ In 1909 a small hospital was set up to accommodate ten to twelve patients, with a trained nurse in charge.⁴⁸ This hospital was supported privately by patient fees until the

⁴⁵The most outstanding example may be Dr. H. P. Kenney, dentist, who came to Olds in 1908 and after being councillor was elected mayor in 1913, an office which he held for three terms [O.G., 11-9-08; Town of Olds, Records of the Town Council (Town Office, Olds)].

⁴⁶The strictness of the sanitation by-laws and their rigid enforcement can be appreciated in light of the debacle in Carstairs where the municipal health officer had to threaten to call in the provincial health authorities before the council and the villagers were sufficiently motivated to clean up the townsite (C.J., 23-7-09). In 1920 Carstairs' only hotel was condemned by provincial authorities as a health hazard. A few months earlier, the village council had discussed the state of the hotel, but took no action since it provided a public service not otherwise available (C.J., 10-10-19, 8-1-20 and issues following).

⁴⁷Olds Board of Trade, Olds, 1906.

⁴⁸O.G., 14-15-09.

cost of hospitalization became prohibitive and under public pressure, the town council made the first of what were to be annual grants in 1917.⁴⁹ The other communities did not give serious consideration to a hospital until the flu epidemic of 1918, and then only Didsbury was able to find the means necessary to support such an institution before the provincial municipal hospital scheme was established.

In other ways the ruggedness of the pioneer life was quickly ameliorated. The town band, organized early in 1898, was soon giving open air concerts in the public park beside the railway station.⁵⁰ The weekly newspaper, first published in 1900 provided a medium for exchanging community news and focussing public interest.⁵¹ The telephone, however limited the hours of operation, destroyed some of the isolation. On the main line between Calgary and Edmonton, the three railway towns quickly had telegraph service, and in 1903 were connected to the Bell Telephone Company toll line between

⁴⁹O.G., 16-2-17, 23-2-17; Town of Olds, Records of the Town Council, By-law #210, 1917. The hospital was briefly supported by the rural municipalities, but when the sharing agreement collapsed, the townspeople once again forced the Olds council to lend financial support to the hospital (O.G., 27-6-19, 4-7-19, 5-9-19, 24-10-19, 14-11-19, 28-11-19, 12-12-19; Town of Olds, Records of Town Council, Meetings of 25-2-19, 10-7-19).

⁵⁰C.H., 17-2-98, 30-5-90. The bandstand was built in 1900.

⁵¹The Olds Oracle started publication August 16, 1900. Few issues survive. The Olds Gazette which is more likely the Oracle renamed than a new paper, was first published in about 1904. (Olds Oracle, 16-9-00, C.H., 16-7-00, 14-5-03, 16-2-05; Calgary Albertan, 10-4-57). The Olds Gazette of March 11, 1904 is Volume III, No. 9.

Calgary and Edmonton.⁵² The train service itself provided an opportunity for travel, excursion rates between the other C. & E. towns and later Banff being part of the normal fare structure. By 1906 the Masons and Oddfellows, two of the seven fraternal lodges, had built their own halls, and these were the scene of many social gatherings.⁵³ The Opera House and the halls over Logan's and Hainstock's stores served the numerous amateur theatrical or choral groups, as well as the professional circuit entertainers.

Sporting activities were no longer just casual pick-up games, but structured around teams and through clubs, and provided with adequate facilities. A race track was built in 1903 as part of the exhibition grounds, and Olds featured annual spring races.⁵⁴ The tennis courts, fenced off from stray milk cows, provided hours of amusement for the club members.⁵⁵ Soccer, baseball, cricket and curling were all part of the life style of Olds, and were organized as spectator sports with a regular schedule, not only for the annual July or occasional Sunday picnic.⁵⁶

Public services in the town were not provided quite as quickly, usually more through lack of money than of

⁵²C.H., 3-12-03.

⁵³Olds Board of Trade, Olds, 1906.

⁵⁴C.H., 7-5-03, 21-6-06; O.G., 15-5-08.

⁵⁵The club was organized in 1907 and competed with the clubs in Didsbury and Carstairs (O.G., 1-6-07).

⁵⁶See Chapter III below. Also, Jensen, "Mountain View," p. 96 ff.

desire. Gradually, however, the worst disadvantages of the townsite and the wide-skied prairies were alleviated. The town slough was drained in 1912,⁵⁷ and sidewalks of cinders, wood or cement provided comfortable footing during wet weather, though the dirt streets would still be unfathomable mud baths. Treed boulevards became common throughout the residential areas, the town park beside the railway station itself providing scenic relief.

Though the railway company was instrumental in draining the slough and allowed the building of the town park on railway property, relationships with the railway were not always cordial. The C. & E. was originally chartered so that ownership would revert to the Canadian Pacific Railway. By virtue of well-laid plans the railway had acquired title to the townsites and though it received adequate returns from the sale of some of its lots, even as late as 1920 there were large areas of undeveloped land on which the company was liable for taxes. The back taxes piled up and in order to relieve itself of liability, the railway turned the land over to the municipal councils in the expectation of having back payments cancelled. The town of Didsbury, whose outstanding debt in 1920 was just under \$8,000 and to which the C. & E. owed just over \$7,600, the loss of revenue was crucial. Part of the financial distress of the towns can be blamed on the post-war depression and the exorbitant

⁵⁷ O.G., 8-9-12.

capital expenditures made after the war, but if the C. & E. had shouldered its taxation responsibilities the day of reckoning might have been postponed indefinitely.⁵⁸

There was also constant friction over the location of the railway crossings and the condition in which the railway maintained them. The Battle of Olds in 1907, in which the town of 554 fought the C.P.R. to the last man, woman and child, though not typical in its extremity, is indicative of the continuing war waged with the C.P.R. and the spirit with which the west approached this eastern corporate interest, a determined and antagonistic spirit which formed part of the western mystique. At stake was the right to use the Second Street Crossing which connected the Olds business area to the residential section on the east side of the tracks. On one corner of Second Street and Railway Avenue West stood the three-storey Merchant's Bank and on the other, W. M. Craig and Company's People's Store. To the north along the street was the business section and to the south was a series of empty lots and past the agricultural grounds another railway crossing. The latter the railway planned to make Olds' main crossing, since closing the Second Street Crossing would make way for an extension to its Olds yard. A main crossing on the outskirts of town was not a merchants' dream of progress and it was no wonder that the townspeople organized and fought back.

⁵⁸D.P., 5-3-20, 21-4-20, 30-11-21, 15-2-22.

At that time the train stopped in Olds four times daily, southbound and northbound,⁵⁹ but on Monday, June 4 when the crossing was finally torn up, the C.P.R. men did not come on the regular run. They had a special car with its own twelve-man contingent of red-coated Mounties as well as a fifty-man crew of toughies, otherwise known as navvies, the men who worked on the railway section gangs.

The company had ample cause to be forearmed. Already the railway had been warned by the hostile reaction encountered during two previous attempts to close the Second Street Crossing. When they arrived on Tuesday afternoon, May 29, the section gang had been frightened off by a show of force, and later that night when they tried again and stole into town from Bowden, the Oldsites were ready again. Not to be undone by the covering darkness, they had arranged a night vigil, and through the use of the firebell and the telephone exchange, the townspeople were soon roused from their beds and on the defensive. The only arrest was the C.P.R. section boss.

Nothing daunted the C.P.R. called in the North West Mounted Police and along with Inspector Duffus the train on that June day in 1907 carried the railway superintendent, J. Niblock. The final assault was made in broad daylight. The fire alarm sounded and the people were out in the streets, ready to defend home, country and the right to cross at

⁵⁹O.G., 4-5-07.

Second Street. Spearheaded by Mayor S. J. Craig, the town council charged into the milling work gang and ordered Niblock's arrest.

Previously the town council had decided to treat all persons interfering with the crossing as trespassers. At the crucial moment Inspector Duffas appeared on the scene and prepared to read the riot act, but having brought the wrong law book was forced to improvise. He said, "In the name of the King I command you to disperse." This to hundreds of Canadians, by birth or adoption, defending what they considered legitimate rights. "You remain at your own peril." Then turning to his men he continued, "If they resist, SHOOT." In the melee that followed several arrests were made by both sides, all prisoners eventually being released without conviction. The Olds Gazette commented: ". . . that the spectators . . . really thought that they had been transferred to Siberia . . ." ⁶⁰ For the other side, the Calgary Herald absolved the N.W.M.P. for acting as C.P.R. bully boys. The work of closing the crossing was completed during the afternoon. Two switches were installed on the right-of-way and a pair of flatcars derailed on either side of the track, the whole double-guarded with ditches to thwart the die-hards. The C.P.R. and the town council compromised during their afternoon conference by agreeing to put the Third Street crossing in better condition by removing

⁶⁰O.G., 8-6-07.

the frog switch from the street.⁶¹

Thereafter relations with the railway improved slightly and when traffic to Olds was sufficiently heavy to merit a night operator the next year, the Gazette was happy to note the arrival of another hockey player.⁶² The railway yard was eventually enlarged in 1910, three years after the proposed plans for such an extension had caused a near-riot. In 1912 the station and railway yard required a staff of five and Olds was now the terminal turning point for some trains, not the flagstop it had been twenty years previously.

Olds prided itself on its progress as a distributing centre. The town was not without ambition, but many civic projects were shelved for lack of funds. The town coffers were not deep enough to provide for more than the demands of an ever-expanding education system, the cost of fire-fighting equipment, minimal street improvements, a measure of public relief and the salaries of the few public servants. With each fire, however large or small, the demand for improved fire fighting equipment rose to fever pitch.

⁶¹This reconstruction of the Battle of Olds is based on news items and editorial opinion carried in the Calgary papers and the Olds Gazette before and after the various incidents which culminated in the closing of the crossing (C.H., 28-5-07, 3-6-07, 4-6-07, 5-6-07; Calgary Albertan, 28-5-07, 1-6-07, 4-6-07; O.G., 18-5-07, 1-6-07, 8-6-07). The Battle of Olds made the front page headlines of the Toronto Globe, 5-6-07. Additional references are found in Olds, Records of the Town Council, Meetings from April 24 to November 20, 1907. In order to resolve the dispute, the town council proposed a provincial conference of municipalities to discuss common grievances against the railway.

⁶²O.G., 13-11-08.

Favourite schemes included the construction of an adequate water supply system to serve both the fire fighters and the householder. Though the risk of fire was great, especially during the winters when there was little snow, the town was not capable of providing better protection than that afforded by the voluntary brigade which was responsible for hauling the chemical engine, the ladders and dozens of water buckets to the scene of the fire. In most cases the time which lapsed between the sounding of the alarm bell and the arrival of the brigade was long enough to ensure that the equipment was ineffectual.⁶³

Electric lighting was another of the amenities for which Olds yearned. In 1911 a plebiscite was held on the question of providing funds to build a publicly owned plant. The plebiscite was defeated, but the matter was never far from public attention, and in 1917 a plant approved by plebiscite was finally in operation.⁶⁴ However keen it might be to provide services and to build an attractive, modern community, the town council's limited means restricted

⁶³ In one of the worst fire years, 1919, an entire block on Railway Avenue burned down early at the beginning of the year followed two weeks later by a three building fire. Then the power plant burned down, and in November of 1919 the Alberta Hotel and adjoining buildings were razed to the ground. The Olds Gazette which was a victim in one of the fires commented that if the town had one more blaze, there would be no need for a fire protection by-law (O.G., 14-11-19).

⁶⁴ O.G., 4-6-09, 24-2-11, 16-2-12, 1-3-12, 19-6-14, 17-7-14, 25-5-17, 31-8-17; Town of Olds, Records of the Town Council, By-law #212.

its capacity to act. Individual townspeople wielded substantial influence, but as in the case of the most important milestones for all the railway towns, policy determined outside the community had a great bearing on Olds' development. The School of Agriculture located in Olds in 1913 was a project forwarded and financed by the provincial government. It was Olds' good fortune to be represented by the Minister of Agriculture and when the choice of site was made it was not unnatural that Olds should be favoured. Duncan Marshall was first elected in the Olds riding in 1909 and was sworn in as Provincial Secretary and Minister of Agriculture later that year. Leaving a newspaper career, and a not too successful political record in Ontario, he had come west in 1905 to be managing editor for Frank Oliver's Edmonton Bulletin. After he won the Olds seat, he bought the Olds Gazette and a large farm east of the town.⁶⁵ Marshall's policies in office were practical, if not innovative. Born and raised on a bush farm in Bruce County, Ontario, he was familiar with the disadvantages of a farming life. In 1911 his department instituted experimental farms throughout the province to improve the standards of agriculture. Then after a study trip to England and Denmark where he visited

⁶⁵ Marshall, "Biography of his father, Duncan Marshall" (three page written speech presented at the Olds Agriculture and Vocational College, winter, 1970. Provenance: Jensen); O.G., 22-10-09; Canada, Parliament, Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1912; interview, F. S. Grisdale, Olds, 31-7-69. Most of those interviewed had recollections of Marshall.

the Danish Folk High Schools, Marshall elevated three of these farms into agricultural schools. Here the rural young people could take courses in farm technology or domestic science.⁶⁶

The immediate effect on Olds as with many government projects was a rapid exchange of property. On May 10, 1911, the day the specific site of the demonstration farm was made public, one real estate agency, run by Marshall's political opponent, George Cloakey, sold seventeen lots, all facing the farm.⁶⁷ Moreover the land for the demonstration farm itself was owned by Augustus M. Nanton, agent for the C. & E. Land Co., and Thomas McKercher, an Olds businessman and Marshall's campaign manager. All of section 33-32-1 W5, of which the farm was to occupy the north half, had been granted to the C. & E. Land Company in 1902, and then sold. Nanton acquired the northwest quarter in 1904, and McKercher the other three quarters on April 9, 1906 and May 11 and July 11, 1911. The government bought the last mentioned quarter on July 20, having bought Nanton's quarter on June 10. Over a month had elapsed before the government purchased the designated land.⁶⁸

The benefits reaped by the town as a whole are not so easily measured. In a survey taken in 1914 it was

⁶⁶Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Annual Report," Sessional Papers, Vol. XLVI, 1912; Vol. XLVII, 1913; Vol. IX, 1914.

⁶⁷O.G., 12-5-11.

⁶⁸O.G., 12-5-11; Alberta, Land Titles Office, Calgary, Section 33-32-1 W5.

estimated that each student would spend \$135 on room, board and incidentals during the five month school term. With 150 students, the school was expected to bring in a revenue of \$20,000.⁶⁹ Since the boarding facilities at the school were very limited, much of the money was paid directly to the householders in town or on nearby farms.

From the one three-storey building at the end of Third Street East, the school was enlarged to include teachers' residences, a livestock pavilion, and other barns and sheds. It grew to be an Olds institution, centre of the progressive farming life, if not so much the town. Without pompous fanfare, the school became a local industry, a captive market which varied little in good times or bad. The first student body in 1913 numbered 100, and a high was reached in 1915 when 165 registered. In the depth of the post-war depression, the number dropped to 114, but this still represented a substantial income, and undoubtedly helped to tide Olds through this slack economic period.⁷⁰

When Olds was designated as a school centre, the town had reached a growth level not far ahead of Didsbury. With the war Olds, the more British-Canadian of the two towns, experienced a larger percentage drop in population. In the interwar years, however, when Didsbury's population

⁶⁹O.G., 28-8-14.

⁷⁰Alberta, Department of Agriculture, "Annual Report," 1913-1925, Sessional Papers, Vol. XLVII-XLXIX, 1913-1925.

remained comparatively stable, Olds surpassed its pre-war level and continued to grow at a noticeable rate.⁷¹ The presence of the school is undoubtedly one factor in this population picture.

The agriculture school in Olds was one of the most successful in the province. Situated in a fertile mixed farming area, which was not unprogressive in its attitude toward improved farming or education of the young, the school is the only one which has remained in continuous operation since its opening, barring the winter of 1918-19 when it served as a hospital during the Spanish flu epidemic. The school as much reflects the general prosperity of the Olds district, as it has helped to build this prosperity.

DIDSBURY

To the south lay a town that superficially was not unlike Olds. It grew up along the same railway, developed a similar falsefronted business street, eventually had its own park and bandstand. It was distinguished from Olds by its ethnic make-up and the spirit of co-operation evident in its many civic projects. There seemed to be little in Didsbury that co-operative effort and private ambition could not accomplish. Didsbury attempted to develop a diversified commercial base. Secondary industry and large processing plants were started with the ambition of making Didsbury a specialized manufacturing centre, serving not only the

⁷¹See Appendix I.

immediate farm hinterland, but the province of Alberta.

Didsbury, much more so than Olds, tried to break from the pattern of development the omnipotent railway had seemingly destined.

Designation as a townsite could not assure growth, at least not beyond a rudimentary post settlement, albeit with the advantage of a railway station. The first settlers in the Didsbury area were predominantly Mennonite Brethren in Christ, directed west under the guidance of Jacob Y. Shantz in 1894.⁷² Settlement in the area was sparse, and this in part explains the slow development of the townsite as a service centre. The first concern of the Mennonites was to build a church; the primary task of the settlers, to create farmsteads. Their interest in developing service industries in Didsbury was minimal. The Mennonites did not forward the commercial development of Didsbury nor did they attract settlers to the area immediately. Settlement prior to the post-1900 land rush was limited to a group of fifty of their religious affiliates who came west in 1898.⁷³ Neither was Didsbury's development pushed forward by the railway, a railway station not being built until 1897.⁷⁴ The first commercial concern built in 1898 was simply a general store

⁷²See Chapter I above.

⁷³C.H., 30-3-98.

⁷⁴C.H., 26-7-97.

run by a non-Mennonite.⁷⁵

Though development of Didsbury was slow during the nineties, the swell in settlement with the turn of the century made it an instant community. Where in 1898 a lone store had stood, by 1901 there were three general stores, a hardware, a hotel, a boarding house, and a full complement of the various services necessary in the era of horses.⁷⁶ Didsbury was rapidly becoming the centre of a well settled and increasingly prosperous farm district. The boarding house was in fact erected to accommodate "hungry land-seekers".⁷⁷

Didsbury remained a centre for the Mennonites, several other branches besides the Brethren in Christ settling in its vicinity.⁷⁸ The town itself did not remain Mennonite, the ethnic balance rapidly shifting with the wave of immigrants after the turn of the century. Didsbury, like

⁷⁵C.H., 28-7-98. As reported in the Herald, it seems anomalous that the settlers in the area had wished for such a convenience, but that no one had seized the obvious opportunity to start a store. The reason is probably lack of money, for a community which was obliged to seek outside funds for the building of even a log church, cannot have had many or any wealthy members (C.H., 30-7-96). This is a full report on the building of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church. ". . . Funds [for the shingles, lime, chairs and necessary lumber] were raised in the east, with the exception of a few dollars . . . A gentleman in Rochester, New York donated \$50.00. . . ."). If the Mennonites were trying to establish a self-contained community, free from outside interference, it would seem logical that they would establish some sort of co-operative store to meet their own needs.

⁷⁶C.H., 27-7-01. There were, of course, other non-commercial buildings.

⁷⁷Olds Oracle, 21-11-02.

⁷⁸See Chapter I above.

Olds, became a centre where the Presbyterian and Methodist churches attracted large followings, but unlike Olds, also a centre where several fundamentalist groups established a mosaic within the town. Counterbalancing the strength of the English-speaking churches was the Germanness of the Evangelicals and Mennonites. In 1902 the Mennonites replaced their log church with one of frame, and the Presbyterians built their own church. In 1903 the Evangelicals built a church, and in 1908 the Anglicans and Methodists. Counting the Baptists who had not yet built a church, there were six established congregations in Didsbury.⁷⁹

The creation of the business community in Didsbury cannot simply be ascribed to one ethnic group or another. Each religious and ethnic grouping was represented by individuals who succeeded in building successful businesses, and became leaders in the community through public office or club sponsored projects. Didsbury seems more than anything to be a town where people of diverse backgrounds were able, under normal peacetime conditions, to function together in a spirit of community friendliness, regardless of their individual beliefs.⁸⁰

Didsbury developed with the same accelerated pace as Olds once the take-off point was reached. In September

⁷⁹ Edmonton Bulletin, 12-10-07; D.P., 30-10-03, 24-12-08. The Seventh Day Adventist built a church in Didsbury in 1911, at which time the Nazarenes also had a church (D.P., 11-10-11, 19-7-11).

⁸⁰ See Appendix VII.

1906 Didsbury, having acquired a population almost as large as Olds', was incorporated as a town.⁸¹ Beside the retail outlets and service centres typical of centres the size of Olds and Didsbury, Didsbury supported a surprising number of processing and manufacturing concerns. A creamery had been established in 1905, and a pork packing plant opened in 1907, shortly before a government operated poultry fattening station was built.⁸² But in addition to these plants which served the agricultural needs of the district, there were a number of firms which flourished during the settlement building boom, but could not survive the economic slowdown which followed this rapid initial growth. The Didsbury Carpet Factory is one example of a company that passed to a quick demise, for nothing is heard of it beyond the grand opening.⁸³ At the same time a sash and door factory was set afoot and it met with more lasting success. It employed thirty men. By 1911, however, the factory buildings stood empty.⁸⁴ A brick yard opened in 1907 and another in 1911, but these seem to have met with brief success, local demand probably not being sufficient.⁸⁵ More successful was the Alberta Culvert

⁸¹ Alberta, Gazette, Vol. 2, No. 19 (November 15, 1906), p. 5. Didsbury became a village in December, 1901 [North-West Territories, Gazette, (January 31, 1902), p. 13].

⁸² Edmonton Bulletin, 12-10-07.

⁸³ D.P., 30-10-03.

⁸⁴ D.P., 30-10-03, 19-7-11; Edmonton Bulletin, 12-10-07.

⁸⁵ Edmonton Bulletin, 12-10-07; D.P., 7-7-11; Alberta, Gazette, Vol. 3, No. 22 (November 11, 1907), p. 9.

Company organized in 1910. Individual initiative and invention sustained the venture. J. R. Good held a patent on a special culvert head, and was able to sell the pipes and culverts manufactured by his company throughout Alberta. Though the record of the company is sketchy, it seems that it too was unable to retain a permanent foothold in Didsbury, and in 1919 the owner-manager, J. R. Good, moved to Calgary to become manager of the newly organized Economy Culvert and Road Supply Company which had absorbed the Didsbury company.⁸⁶ In all cases it seems that a rural town was not able to support secondary industry unless it was related directly to agriculture.⁸⁷

The Maple Leaf Flour Mills is not only an example of the success the latter type of industry enjoyed, but also of the co-operative spirit which pervaded the Didsbury community. Built in 1906 at an initial cost of \$8,000, the mill operated fairly successfully, even milling its own brand, Rosebud Flour, and employed as many as twelve men.⁸⁸ In May, 1910 the entire complex, grist mill, chop house, and

⁸⁶D.P., 21-12-10, 26-7-11, 10-9-19. An owner of the company when it was formed in Didsbury, D. G. Moyer, sold out his share in 1911 to go homesteading (D.P., 19-7-11).

⁸⁷In Carstairs, a corn broom factory set up in 1911 was termed the "starter industry for Carstairs", but operated only briefly, such a factory being exceptional for Carstairs where even a creamery had difficulty remaining operational (C.J., 24-3-11, 4-7-13).

⁸⁸Edmonton Bulletin, 12-10-07.

elevator, burned to the ground. Of the loss estimated at \$75,000 only part was covered by insurance. Manasseh Weber, the owner-manager, was without means to rebuild, but the people in and around Didsbury fully realized the advantages of having a grist mill and were willing to assist him in becoming re-established. At a joint meeting the Alberta Farmers Association and the Didsbury business community decided to raise \$10,000 through private subscription. District canvassers were appointed and townsmen and farmers alike from Westcott to Sunnyslope were asked to contribute.⁸⁹ Though the mill was rebuilt and in operation by the end of 1910, it seems to have floundered, and in 1913 was bought by a group of Calgary businessmen, Weber remaining as manager with a small equity in the mill.⁹⁰

That community was not bereft of capital is shown by the Didsbury fire of 1914. Disaster struck the town on New Year's Day, 1914. During the early hours of the morning fire swept through two blocks of the business section, destroying over thirty-five business premises. Damage was estimated at a quarter of a million dollars, of which only half was covered by insurance. The Golden West Hotel, the Alexandra Hotel, Chambers' Drugstore, the Masonic and Oddfellows halls,

⁸⁹D.P., 8-6-10, 15-6-10, 10-8-10. The canvassers were by no means all Mennonites, but included such men as J. E. Liesemer, Mel Gaddes, John Dageforde, R. B. Martin, as well as D. D. Shantz, and E. B. Shantz. J. E. Stauffer was also quite active in the campaign.

⁹⁰D.P., 16-4-13. Even in 1917 the mill had not returned to its pre-fire prosperity (D.P., 21-3-17).

the Royal Bank, the Massey Harris agency, the jewellery store, the Bijou Moving Picture Theatre where the fire had broken out, were among the buildings destroyed.⁹¹ But almost the next day the merchants were busy rebuilding, and before the year was out many of the stores re-opened.⁹² The building code became stricter, setting a fire zone where wooden structures of any description were not tolerated.⁹³ Didsbury's mainstreet took on a new appearance, one building after another taking on the prosperous look of sturdy red brick.

The spirit of co-operation and collective ambition was evident in many aspects of Didsbury's development. In Olds there was a prolonged battle to supply the town with electricity, but in Didsbury a plebiscite was passed when the question was first raised in 1911, and a publicly owned generator was running by the end of the year.⁹⁴ Similarly the town council instituted a public library, the first to receive the equalization grant from the government in 1908.⁹⁵ Not all initiative for local improvements came from the council. A Didsbury Curling Club and Didsbury Rinks Limited were formed to provide improved facilities for curlers, and

⁹¹D.P., 30-10-03.

⁹²By May, 1914 thirteen building permits for a total of \$100,000 had been issued, including a \$50,000 hotel, the Rosebud (D.P., 13-5-14).

⁹³Town of Didsbury, Records of the Town Council, By-law #117; D.P., 7-1-14.

⁹⁴D.P., 7-6-11, 7-7-11.

⁹⁵D.P., 21-2-08, 21-8-08, 24-2-09.

though the latter was not always solvent, membership included many of the well known businessmen who all seemed to be avid curlers.⁹⁶

There were however certain features which worked against total community harmony. World War One presented obvious problems not only because of the Alien Act, but also because of the pacifism of the Mennonites, particularly the rural Mennonites.⁹⁷ Apart from the ethnic difficulties there was also the problem of the residential subdivision, Lacknerville.

Didsbury had an almost unique town plan, becoming two townsites side by side. When Didsbury was erected into a village in December, 1901, the N.W. 1/4 of 18-31-1 W5 was demarcated as its site.⁹⁸ The following year however, Dr. Franklin A. Lackner and his sister Vina or Melvina came from Berlin, Ontario, to take up residence in Didsbury and were successful in subdividing the adjoining quarter, N.E. 1/4 18-31-1 W5, which Lackner had obtained through a crown grant in 1894.⁹⁹ How Lackner acquired the quarter in the first instance remains somewhat of a mystery. Apparently William Lackner, father of Franklin and Vina, had accompanied Jacob Y. Shantz west in 1892 when he and his party were

⁹⁶ D.P., 11-6-19, 29-10-19, 24-10-23.

⁹⁷ See Chapter III.

⁹⁸ N.W.T. Gazette, January 31, 1902, p. 13.

⁹⁹ Correspondence to the author from Alberta, Land Titles Office, Calgary, February 5, 1971.

scouting for land for the Mennonite settlers.¹⁰⁰ As payment for putting up the immigration shed in Didsbury, Shantz was to receive a quarter section adjacent to the railway townsite.¹⁰¹ It seems likely that Shantz gave up the title to Lackner, either as a favour or for some remuneration. If William Lackner did in fact accompany Shantz west in 1892 it would help to explain how the Lackners acquired title to several other townsites in Alberta and Saskatchewan.¹⁰²

The subdivision came to be known as Lacknerville, and became a residential area. The problems posed by the existence of two separate townsites were enormous. Lacknerville does not seem to have had any form of public

¹⁰⁰ MacRae, History of Alberta, Vol. II, p. 1039. William Lackner was a United Brethren Mennonite (Correspondence to the author, Ontario Department of Public Records and Archives, February 22, 1971. 1871 census of Wellesley township, Waterloo county). Franklin and Melvina age 11 and 4 respectively in the 1871 census, later joined the Anglican and Presbyterian churches, again respectively (MacRae, History of Alberta, p. 1039 ff).

¹⁰¹ Weber, "Such was Life," p. 5. C.H., 4-6-96 states that ". . . Three years ago, a prominent Dominion lands agent from Ontario, J. Y. Shantz, accompanied by a few eastern friends, went through this region and exploring it nicely, they saw a promising future for this district. . . . these gentlemen made application for free homesteads - the agent himself taking one as remuneration for putting up an immigrant shed for the convenience of settlers who arrive"

¹⁰² Trained as a dentist, Franklin Lackner set up a practice that rotated between Wetaskiwin and Didsbury, and later Crossfield and Carstairs (C.J., 11-9-08). Besides owning the property known as Lacknerville, the brother and sister had an interest in a coal mine west of the town, a number of ranches, and several other townsites in Alberta and Saskatchewan (MacRae, History of Alberta, Vol. II, p. 1039 ff.). In 1912 a Lackner Townsite located near Beddington, seven and a half miles north of Calgary, was auctioned (Morning Albertan,

administration and had to resort to private initiative to build sidewalks or improve roads. Lackner himself took responsibility for organizing such efforts. Lacknerville was incorporated into Didsbury when it became a town in 1906,¹⁰³ but a good deal of animosity remained between the two sections of the town, or at least between the town council and Lackner, which centred on indemnification for improvements that had been made while Lacknerville was still a separate and autonomous subdivision.¹⁰⁴ Though incorporation was effected in 1906, Lacknerville retained its own identity, becoming known as East Didsbury.

CARSTAIRS

Carstairs too had its Lacknerville, but here the problem as for many other things in Carstairs was aggravated by the fact that Carstairs remained a village. A plan for subdividing the northeast corner of the N.E. 1/4 of 8-30-1 W5 was registered with the Land Titles Office in 1905 by Daniel Lackner.¹⁰⁵ The area containing sixty-four lots, was due south of the Carstairs townsite and came to be known as

27-1-12). In 1910 Lackner left Didsbury and settled in Calgary. His sister remained in Didsbury and as late as 1917 was a permanent guest at the Rosebud Hotel (D.P., 18-7-17).

¹⁰³ Alberta, Gazette, Vol. 2, No. 19 (November 15, 1906), p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ D.P., 5-1-10, 16-10-12.

¹⁰⁵ Correspondence, Alberta, Land Titles Office, Calgary, January 15, 1971. The quarter was Hudson's Bay Company land and was purchased by James S. Smith on April 6, 1905 and immediately transferred to Daniel Lackner.

Lacknerville. Like the subdivision in Didsbury it became a residential area.¹⁰⁶ Since there was no municipal government either common with or separate from Carstairs, Lacknerville depended on voluntary subscriptions to finance public services. In many instances, especially fire protection, Carstairs sold these services, however grudgingly.¹⁰⁷ The obvious solution was to incorporate the area into Carstairs, making it liable for taxes, and by the same token raising Carstairs' status to that of town.¹⁰⁸ Lacknerville was eventually annexed to the village in 1916, but retained much of its identity as an elite residential area. As in Didsbury, the residents complained that the village council was prejudicial in the attention it failed to lavish on the subdivision.¹⁰⁹

But Lacknerville was only one of Carstairs' problems. The optimism and bright prospects generated by the high tide of settlement in the period 1903 to 1906 were soon replaced by a sense of failure, and instead of sounding the virtues of Carstairs, the local paper constantly urged the citizens to do something, anything to give the town a

¹⁰⁶C.J., 6-10-11. Though the common name Lacknerville would suggest more than mere coincidence, it is difficult to establish the connection between the Lackners in Didsbury and the Lackners in Carstairs. The background of Daniel Lackner is obscure; the only biographical information is that he came from Princeton, Idaho (Town of Carstairs, Record of the Village Council, Meeting of 3-4-16).

¹⁰⁷C.J., 6-6-10, 6-10-11, 9-9-12.

¹⁰⁸C.J., 19-11-09, 20-1-11, 26-1-12.

¹⁰⁹C.J., 21-9-17, 10-10-19. Compare with D.P., 16-10-12.

lift.¹¹⁰ Carstairs' growth resulted from the intensive settlement of the immediate area, and it was in many respects a boom town, catering to a rapidly expanding economy. Between 1903 and 1906 most of the land within thirty to forty miles of the railway was entered or purchased.¹¹¹ Carstairs was then ready to progress beyond the store built by E. W. Stone in 1901, and the single year 1906 witnessed the building of twenty businesses and nearly thirty homes.¹¹² The Royal was built as Carstairs' second hotel, and with Stone's Albion provided adequate sample rooms and accommodation for visitors and newly arrived settlers. The Merchant's Bank as in Olds and Didsbury set up a branch on Railway Avenue where there was also a drug store and a photo studio. There was a lumber company, a community hall, a creamery, a flour and feed store, and two implement dealers. A Presbyterian Church had been built in 1901, a Roman Catholic in 1904, and a Methodist in 1906. A \$10,000 school was a recent addition.¹¹³ However, once the initial demands of the new settlers were met, Carstairs had served a great part of its usefulness, and with Didsbury and Crossfield, close by, it found competition

¹¹⁰The image of the village is created partially through its newspaper, the Carstairs Journal which was first published in 1905 and stopped publication in 1922. It met a slow death, losing whatever vitality it once had at least half a decade previously. The Carstairs News started publication shortly thereafter.

¹¹¹C.J., 1-6-06, 7-9-06.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³The school proved to be an extravagance the school district could not afford, once the debenture issues became due

severe. The building of the Canadian Northern Railway fifteen miles east of Carstairs, and the Canadian Pacific branch line twenty-five miles east, provided a brief boom for the village in 1909-1910.¹¹⁴ But the growth level attained by 1911 was barely maintained in absolute terms for the next few decades.

In many ways Carstairs strove for the same local improvements and social standards as Disbury and Olds. Without an aggressive business community to lend support through leadership and the purse, Carstairs could only achieve half measures. The case of the public hall may be cited. H. Lusk operated his Opera House for a few years,¹¹⁵ but it burned down in a fire which in 1910 threatened to destroy the whole village. Fortunately the wind came from the right direction, and only one of the hotels and the hall itself were destroyed.¹¹⁶ Typically of Carstairs, neither was rebuilt. One of the businessmen then rented out his warehouse behind the Royal Hotel, for use as a public hall. There was however a constant danger that the hall would be reconverted into a warehouse, and that Carstairs would then again be without any place of public assembly. The Journal editor admonished the citizens for not forming a joint stock company to build a

(C.J., 1-6-06, 16-1-14; Town of Carstairs, Records of Carstairs School District #642).

¹¹⁴C.J., 16-4-09, 30-4-09, 23-9-10.

¹¹⁵C.J., 7-9-06.

¹¹⁶C.J., 10-10-10; O.G., 14-10-10.

publicly owned hall, but met with little response.¹¹⁷ When the Opera house was finally converted into a Ford showroom in 1918,¹¹⁸ there was again some longwinded discussion but little concrete effort to remedy the situation. The village council discussed the matter, but remained undecided, an investment of that size requiring the approval of the provincial government.¹¹⁹ Finally three men leased the building which had been used as the U.F.A. store, and converted it into a public hall.¹²⁰

Carstairs was slowly dying during the war years. When a McLean Brothers Cash Store opened in 1915, it was greeted as a salvation, the necessary stimulant for attracting business to Carstairs, and making it once again the business centre for the surrounding district.¹²¹ Within a year the McLean store had closed, and the building itself was converted into a school gymnasium.¹²² There were other business failures, one of the oldest merchants, again in general merchandise, closing shortly before the McLean store.¹²³ Though the Industrial Number produced by the Journal in 1913 would seem to testify to a vigorous, thriving community, it was the

¹¹⁷C.J., 21-2-13.

¹¹⁸C.J., 8-3-18.

¹¹⁹C.J., 19-9-19.

¹²⁰C.J., 21-11-19.

¹²¹C.J., 13-8-15, 3-9-15, 10-9-15.

¹²²C.J., 9-6-16.

¹²³C.J., 26-2-15.

district, not the village itself, which could be characterized in such a way.¹²⁴

Carstairs seems slowly to have deteriorated after the initial buildings were erected, with fire acting as the only remedial force. The one hotel left after the 1910 fire may have been adequate as a frame hotel when it was first built, but in 1920 it was condemned as a public health hazard.¹²⁵ Prohibition may partly be blamed for its state of disrepair, since the hotel was owned by outsiders with no interest in Carstairs as such.¹²⁶ The hotel had been operated by Chinese members of the community in recent years, and when a new hotel opened briefly two years later, care was taken to advertise it as employing all white help.¹²⁷

Carstairs was defeated by its size. The "town hall", twenty feet by thirty, was built in 1911 at the cost of \$830, some eight years after Carstairs had been incorporated as a village.¹²⁸ The curling rink, instead of being enclosed as

¹²⁴Industrial Number of C.J., 4-7-13.

¹²⁵C.J., 10-10-19, 8-1-20.

¹²⁶C.J., 8-1-20.

¹²⁷C.J., 11-5-22. A similarly phrased advertisement was carried for the Rosebud Hotel in Didsbury when the management intended to upgrade the hotel to its former standards (D.P., 19-11-19), and for a new boarding house that opened in the town (D.P., 19-9-23). A brick hotel was built in Carstairs in 1925 after prohibition (Carstairs News, 3-8-24).

¹²⁸Town of Carstairs, Records of the Village Council, Meeting of 6-5-11. Carstairs though technically a village was usually referred to as a town, and hence it was a town hall, not a village hall that was built.

in Olds and Didsbury, was simply a shack that kept the well from freezing over, and provided some measure of protection for skaters and curlers.¹²⁹

The biggest ecological disadvantage was undoubtedly the poor drainage which did much to detract from Carstairs. The problem of the village sloughs was a constant topic of debate, and the farming community was as irritated by the condition of the streets as were townspeople. A ditch was dug to drain the townsite in 1907,¹³⁰ but the next summer, H. W. Wood, in one of his many letters to the Carstairs Journal, could still write: "If Tennyson had lived in Carstairs, Break, Break, Break would never have been written, but Pump, Pump, Pump, every day and all day."¹³¹ The root of the problem was not only the general slope of the land which placed Carstairs in the path of the general runoff, but also the extremely porous nature of the soil.¹³² The situation thus could not simply be met as in Olds by filling in low ground, but required an adequate drainage system. An engineer was hired in 1913 to prepare a cost survey, and though a petition was circulated among the townspeople, probably for submission to the Department of Municipal

¹²⁹C.J., 21-11-13, 12-9-19, 19-9-19.

¹³⁰C.J., 25-10-07.

¹³¹C.J., 21-7-08.

¹³²Ibid. Between Lacknerville and Carstairs lay a broad slough which, when dry, served as a football field.

Affairs, nothing seems to have been definitely resolved.¹³³

Size hampered Carstairs' development in another direction. The townspeople were divided by their religious loyalties and in a place the size of Carstairs internal conflicts were likely to cause major rifts in the village's fabric. The Methodist congregation was established in Carstairs in 1901, and built their church in 1906. They first used the Presbyterian church for their services, but relations between the two churches were not always on such friendly terms. In an open dispute during the winter of 1910, many vitriolic statements were exchanged between the two ministers, the Presbyterian minister being perhaps the more biting.¹³⁴ The dispute was in many respects a personal one between the two ministers and the situation was eased when they received calls elsewhere. The animosity aroused could not but carry over to the laity. Two lecture series were held, one in 1912 and another in 1916, to forward the cause of church union,

¹³³C.J., 6-12-13, 18-4-13. The problem of drainage was finally solved when a water and sewage system was installed in 1952 (C.H., 26-8-64).

¹³⁴C.J., 4-3-10 and issues following. Statements included such harsh judgements as: "The code of honour and morals as practised in the Methodist church today is too crude and low for the Presbyterian to associate with. . . ." "The Lord have mercy on the town [of Carstairs] when there is nothing here to represent Him but Methodists." The dispute, which began over the scheduling of a meeting of the Temperance and Moral Reform League, brought out all the latent dislike of one church for the other, which significantly included the winning of converts from the Presbyterian to the Methodist Church by such foul means as revival meetings and music in the church.

and met with a favourable response, but in 1925, the Presbyterian church remained Presbyterian.¹³⁵

The only other Protestant church organized in Carstairs was the Anglican, St. Luke's Parish, but it met with little success. The first services were held in 1906 in the Presbyterian church, but by 1913 even services conducted by visiting ministers had stopped.¹³⁶ However, there was an active Roman Catholic church in Carstairs which drew its support from the rural area as well as the village. In Mountain View, Carstairs was the centre of the Catholic church, with its own resident priest from 1906. The priest served the area from Crossfield to Olds, and later Water Valley when a Catholic church was built there during the thirties. The Loyal Orange Order, however, seems to have held a recognized position within the community, whereas in Didsbury a chapter does not seem to have been organized, and in Olds, Lodge Number 1747 was revived in 1910 and continued for a few years thereafter, attracting both the Methodist and Baptist minister to its ranks.¹³⁷ The lodge seems to have had a more permanent place in the Carstairs community. Lodge Number 1907 was organized at least as early as 1906 and besides the celebration of the twelfth of July sponsored a number of public entertainments. Mention is made of the

¹³⁵C.J., 16-8-12, 11-2-16 and issues following.

¹³⁶C.J., 1-6-06, 4-7-13.

¹³⁷O.G., 29-7-10, 30-1-14, 10-7-14.

Orange Lodge as late as 1922, and the organization could not have eased relations within the town.¹³⁸

The actual effect that such an anti-papist group would have on splintering Carstairs society is difficult to measure in absolute terms. It is worthy of note that though one of the wealthiest families in Carstairs was Catholic, its name is not prominent in municipal government or projects. On the other hand a leading Presbyterian held the office of reeve and councilman throughout the period 1913 to 1925, and when the reason for Carstairs' backwardness came under public scrutiny, part of the blame was laid at his doorstep.¹³⁹ Though Carstairs was not a one man town, examples of outstanding community leadership are difficult to find.

The Carstairs Journal editor asked, "Can Carstairs grow?",¹⁴⁰ and by 1925 an affirmative answer seemed unlikely. There was not the cohesiveness within the town which, given its limited size, would have been required to pull Carstairs beyond the stage of a small service centre.¹⁴¹ In that

¹³⁸C.J., 23-2-06, 12-7-07, 30-10-08, 11-12-08, 16-7-09, 11-5-22.

¹³⁹C.J., 5-12-19, 12-12-19.

¹⁴⁰C.J., 29-8-19.

¹⁴¹With modern transportation, proximity to Calgary has reduced the business section substantially. This is offset by the people connected with the oil industry who have increased the residential area of Carstairs and support small consumer services.

stage Carstairs remained until the post-World War II oil boom. Nearby competition severely restricted the types of business which could flourish in the town. Even during the time of horse powered transportation, Didsbury, Calgary and finally the department store catalogues were too convenient and attractive. While the adjoining farm district needed a centre to supply its day-to-day needs, including elevators, smithy, and farm machinery, this was not a sufficient base for development. There was no internal drive which forced Carstairs' growth,¹⁴² and no outside benevolence applied as was the case in Didsbury and Olds. Carstairs was a small service centre, a village, while the other two railway centres were towns.

¹⁴²The Association of Boosters (AOB) and the Board of Trade were activated in the early twenties, but except as a socializing group, their effect on Carstairs seems to have been negligible (C.J., 20-4-22, 11-5-22).

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF A SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY IDENTITY

INTRODUCTION

The County of Mountain View was created as a municipal unit in 1961 to administer the diverse region described in the preceding two chapters. The incorporated urban centres remained outside its jurisdiction except in the matter of school affairs where they elect representatives to a joint council. The towns are nevertheless an integral part of the county, not only as shopping and educational centres but also as social centres where many of the churches, clubs and societies are organized and locate their buildings. Though the trend in the past few years has obviously been toward centralization, most noticeably in the schools and post offices, there exist enough residual rural institutions to hint at the older social patterns which gave structure to the daily routine of Mountain View. The churches, the clubs, the social functions and sporting events which were advertised and reported in the papers are each a measure of the people and their style of life. But they are more than that. They are a fair indication of the values and standards the society in all its diversity set. The issues which were

debated in public, the opinions expressed as editorials or letters to the editor, in personal letters, in diaries, or in conversation with those who were children or young adults during the period to 1925, all paint a picture of a self-contained community, and give it its own peculiar hue within the regional or national composite.

There are several obvious ways to measure the social development of an area. A record of the churches and societies, the sporting activities and the social events would give an overall indication of the socializing pattern of a community and hint at the class structure both in the town and the country. A definitive analysis of class lines in each railway centre or between the rural-urban communities would have to depend on membership lists from the various societies and churches and their correlation with biographical details of the individual members. Details of this kind are too few to more than hint at the class structure, the biographical information being highly selective, and the church and club records in many cases not available. Generalizations based on so little evidence can only be of the most cautious nature. One value of local history is that it is a record of a district's peculiarities, of the things that may except a selected region from the conventional and traditional interpretation. It is the purpose of local history to support or refute these interpretations, but because of its limited scope and the nature of the evidence, generalizations must remain tentative. Otherwise

conclusions are no more valid than the traditional overviews.

If class structures are difficult to define, an overview of the community is readily drawn from the social institutions which it supported. From these emerge an identifiable community character. But the question remains whether this character encompasses the disparate parts or is a composite, each section peculiar in itself. A community character, however, is not merely shaped by its social institutions and its administrative superstructure but by the crises and issues which are met in common and which either weld the community together or force it apart. In the period to 1925 there were several focal points, one being prohibition and another the First World War. The process of settlement and the creation of order and security is possibly the first shared experience. The extent to which the process of settlement actually fostered a unified community is a moot point. Certainly the diversity of churches and the wide range of clubs and societies would not indicate an exceptionally cohesive community.

The problem to be tackled in this chapter is simply the identification of the social structure within Mountain View by an examination of community institutions and events. The nature of the community which emerges from such a study should give some insight into the values and life style of rural Alberta.

CHURCHES

Churches have an overriding importance in characterizing the community of Mountain View not only because of the presence of several fundamentalist groups which set rigid standards of social behaviour, but because by the same token, churches ordered much of the social life of the people. In Mountain View there was a wide variety of churches, as well as a number of congregations for each church. As might be expected the three railway towns, the population centres, supported a full spectrum of churches including Presbyterian, Methodist, Evangelical, Mennonite, Lutheran, Anglican and Roman Catholic. In the rural area it was not uncommon for several and in one case five churches to function within one district. It seems that sparsity in numbers was not an obstacle to erection of the true church and that the opportunity to attend the church of one's chosen faith was coveted. The disunity created by the diversity of churches can perhaps be overdrawn, but it cannot be doubted that the unity if not necessarily harmony that a single established church would have brought was lost, and had to be found through other instruments than the church.

On the other hand the church was the instrument for preserving a cultural heritage. This is especially evident within the German congregations. St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Westcott, for example, used the German language for its services until the forties, except for a brief period during the two World Wars when such a practice was unwise in view

of the legal strictures and popular sentiment.¹ Similarly the Evangelical congregation in Didsbury held services in German², and ministers from the German Reform Church in Calgary preached on important religious dates in the Didsbury Presbyterian Church, again in German.³

The German language and thereby the culture seems to have been preserved largely for religious reasons. Though no opportunity was afforded in the public school system for the study of individual languages other than those generally prescribed for the whole province, there was sufficient interest in keeping German alive to start a language class in Didsbury prior to World War One. The class met in the Baptist church.⁴ Similarly dress style was kept alive, as for example among the Old Mennonites near Carstairs.⁵ In the long run, the churches could not withstand the influence of the English language introduced by the next generation who attended schools conducted in English. However, vestiges of the language and culture remained, reinforced as in the case of the Bergthalers by the arrival of new immigrants,⁶ or by affiliation within a larger church conference which could

¹Interview, Mrs. John Jacobsen, Didsbury, August, 1971.

²D.P., 30-10-03, 12-3-13.

³D.P., 26-2-13.

⁴D.P., 26-7-11.

⁵C.J., 23-5-13.

⁶The Russian Mennonites arrived in Canada in several groups after 1923.

afford to support German language books and papers. Not all German churches were interested in preserving their individual cultural identity. In the case of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, where the goal of proselytization was all important, it was highly desirable to lose their unique ethnicity, especially after the anti-German feelings aroused in the First World War. This church therefore was not a bulwark against assimilation or conformity, but quite the reverse.⁷

Ethnic groups that did not establish their own church seem to have lost their cultural identity relatively more quickly. For example, the Norwegians who settled in fair numbers in Bergen tried initially to establish a school which would use Norwegian as the language of instruction. This proved impossible in face of the many non-Norwegians within the Bergen school district.⁸ Nor did they set up a church of their own, but generally became members of the Mennonite church.⁹ Similarly in Eagle Hill, a fund was started by the Norwegians for the building of a church, but these plans were not completed.¹⁰ Though many of the log

⁷The Mennonite Brethren in Christ changed their name to United Missionary after the Second World War, and then to Missionary in order to dissociate themselves from the stigma of the Mennonite name. [Mr. and Mrs. Noah Swalm, "History of the United Missionary Church Canadian Northwest District, 1894 to 1962," (Canadian Northwest District, 1965)].

⁸Interview, Mrs. Trygve Haug, Bergen, August 28, 1970.

⁹Interview, Mrs. Muriel Eskrick, Sundre, June 11, 1969.

¹⁰O.G., 13-10-11.

houses in the Bergen and Eagle Hill areas are identifiably Norwegian, other less tangible aspects of the culture could only be kept alive within the individual family units. Leaving the family circle inevitably meant losing a great portion of this heritage.

As a reflection of the ethnic make-up of the town, churches in Olds were primarily traditional, characteristically not of the Anabaptist variety. In 1893 the Presbyterian session issued a call in conjunction with Bowden, and a manse was built for the incumbent in Olds.¹¹ The following year the Anglican Parish of St. John's was erected, but there was no incumbent until the church was built in 1902.¹² This was the year that the Roman Catholic church was built, though as in the case of other denominations services had been held by itinerants since the arrival of the first settlers in the Olds area.¹³ The Methodists were formally organized at the instigation of the Northwest Conference in the summer of 1899, and the next year a church was built after the arrival of an ordained minister.¹⁴ In 1903 the Baptists purchased and remodelled the old one-room schoolhouse and used it as their church.¹⁵ The core of the Baptist church had first

¹¹C.H., 10-10-93

¹²C.H., 7-8-02; O.G., 8-9-55.

¹³C.H., 7-9-02.

¹⁴C.H., 16-7-00; Olds Old Timers Association, See Olds First, p. 170.

¹⁵Mrs. John Bush, "Baptist History in Olds, Dedication Service of the First Baptist Church of Olds, November 11, 1961" (Provenance: Mrs. John Bush, Olds).

homesteaded north of Olds as part of the Samis colony, but many members of the group had by 1903 taken up permanent residence in Olds, and become a vital part of the business community.¹⁶ By 1911 the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene had formed an immigration society, and this may be supposed to be the forerunner of the church that was later built.¹⁷

The churches in Didsbury fall into two categories, evangelical-missionary and traditional, with the more zealous evangelists having the greater share of success. As can be expected, one of the first community projects of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ was the building of a church, and in the spring of 1895 logs were hauled from the Little Red River. Funds were supplied by senior congregations in the east, and the little church was dedicated in the summer of 1896.¹⁸ The Evangelical Association organized in Didsbury in 1902 and in 1903 dedicated its own church.¹⁹ In 1902

¹⁶ Reverend James Samis settled northwest of Olds in 1893. Members of this Nebraskan colony who came with Samis or settled in the area later because of familial ties include his sons Adoniram J. and Herbert A. Samis; two brothers, John and Art Bush, and O. S. Moore. Subsequently Adoniram J. Samis became a justice of the peace in Olds and founded the Olds Oracle in 1900; Herbert A. Samis became a real estate and insurance agent in Olds; Art Bush became Olds' jeweller; John Bush, the postmaster in 1908; and O. S. Moore pharmacist and general merchant. (Alberta, Department of Lands and Forests, Homestead Files; C.H., 5-1-99, 16-7-00, 16-1-02, 30-5-05; O.G., 8-9-55; Calgary Albertan, 10-4-57. A complimentary biography of A. J. Samis is found in MacRae, History of the Province of Alberta, Vol. II, pp. 1014-15).

¹⁷ O.G., 17-4-11.

¹⁸ C.H., 30-7-96.

¹⁹ D.P., 30-10-03, 15-3-13.

Knox Presbyterian Church was built in Didsbury²⁰ and six years later the Methodist Church.²¹ In the same year, 1908, St. Cyprian's Anglican Church was dedicated.²² By 1911 Nazarene and Seventh Day Adventist congregations had been organized in Didsbury, the latter building a church that year.²³ The Nazarene like the other evangelistic churches functioned well through camp meetings, and during the summer Didsbury became a revival centre as one group after another pitched its tents.

The Anglican and Methodist churches did not flourish in Didsbury. The Anglican congregation, never large, seems to have built with most visionary prospects. The congregation was not able to sustain an incumbent and for almost eight years prior to 1920 services were very occasional. The case of the Methodists is peculiar to Didsbury, for generally the Methodist church thrived equally with the Presbyterian. The church unfortunately burned to the ground in February, 1911 less than three years after it was built, and services thereafter were held in the Presbyterian church.²³ Of the three railway centres, Didsbury was the only one to favour church union--in both Olds and Carstairs the Presbyterian church remained aloof. Whether in recognition of the fact that union had for all practical purposes taken place or

²⁰D.P., 30-10-03, 16-11-10.

²¹Records of the Olds Methodist Church (Provenance: St. Stephen's College, Edmonton).

²²D.P., 24-12-08.

²³D.P., 1-2-11.

whether under the influence of their pro-union minister, the Presbyterian laity in Didsbury supported union with an overwhelming majority, as did the affiliated Presbyterian church in Westcott. In a vote taken in 1912, and repeated in 1915, both Presbyterian churches favoured union, though such a practice was not formally recognized until the general Canadian church union.²⁴

The church history of Carstairs is distinct from that of both Olds and Didsbury. The Methodists and Presbyterians moved into the village first, and in 1901 Knox Presbyterian Church was built, and in 1906, the Methodist.²⁵ The Anglican Church, St. Luke's, retained a foothold only briefly, the first services being conducted in the Presbyterian Church in 1906. By 1913 even itinerant services seem to have stopped.²⁶ St. Agnes' Roman Catholic Church retained an active following, depending on the rural area as much as Carstairs for support. The church was built in 1904, and within two years, Carstairs welcomed her first resident priest.²⁷

Though many churches were located in the railway centres, a significant number were built in the rural area, either affiliated with or independent of the town congregations. In most cases it was the fundamentalist-evangelistic

²⁴D.P., 7-2-12, 17-11-15.

²⁵C.H., 15-2-06.

²⁶C.J., 1-6-06, 4-7-13.

²⁷C.J., 4-7-13.

churches which proved to be the strongest both in establishing new congregations and in retaining an active following. The Methodist and Presbyterian churches were equally as strong as the Mennonite sects.

The Anglican church established several rural parishes in the areas where settlers were English. St. James Parish included the Rugby, Atkins and Big Prairie school districts. In 1908 a log church was being built on the Big Prairie west of the Little Red Deer River when a forest fire raced through the area, destroying the construction material. A church, called All Saints Episcopal, was built a few years later, and Anglican services were held for a year or two before the outbreak of the First World War. Many of the young men of the congregation, recent British emigrants, returned home to the British military, and with this drastic loss in membership, the church closed and remained closed until 1946 when it briefly re-opened.²⁸ In Harmattan, services were held in private homes and the school until St. George's was built in 1910.²⁹ This church, supported by a handful of families, has remained open ever since and is now served by the incumbent from Olds. Another Anglican congregation was formed at the Burnside school as a result of the settlement of demobilized soldiers in the area, and yet

²⁸C.J., 28-11-13; Percy Bird, "History of the Parish of St. James" (unpublished manuscript. Provenance: Glenbow-Alberta Institute).

²⁹O.G., 9-12-10.

another at the Bancroft school.³⁰

The Presbyterian and Methodists, as can be expected from the high proportion of former Americans and eastern Canadians settling in Mountain view, were successful in establishing many rural mission fields, in addition to actually building churches. A Presbyterian church was built at Westcott in 1902, and a Methodist at Westerdale in 1904, a union church, Bennett-Hammer, east of Olds in 1912³¹, and another union church, Hainstock-Berrydale, west of Olds, in the mid-twenties.³² In the summer student-missionaries held services in many of the school districts throughout Mountain View. Mission fields were not exclusive domains, preachers from all faiths, not only Methodist and Presbyterian, utilizing the school house to guide the faithful.

From the Zion Evangelical Church in Didsbury, the Evangelical Association founded several mission fields. Sunnyslope and Westcott were served by the Didsbury minister from 1903, and Siebertville and Mayton from 1904. In 1905 a church was built at Siebertville, and together Mayton and Siebertville formed a separate mission field, though a church

³⁰ Interview, Mrs. D. M. Page, Carstairs, 4-7-69.

³¹ History compiled by the Olds View Women's Institute, circa 1952 (Provenance: Mrs. E. Gasser, Olds); O.G., 22-4-21; Records of the Bennett-Hammer Church (Provenance: St. Stephen's College, Edmonton).

³² O.G., 12-8-54.

at Mayton was not obtained until the thirties.³³ The total membership of these churches is difficult to assess, Evangelical not being considered one of the principal religions for the purposes of the 1901 and 1911 Censuses of Canada. However, since Didsbury was the original centre for the Evangelical Association, it can probably be safely assumed that the majority of the Evangelicals listed for Alberta as a whole were from the Mountain View area. This would give this church 74 members in 1901, and 1,032 members in 1911.³⁴ The Evangelical Association, like the Mennonite Brethren in Christ depended largely on converts to sustain and expand the church. Their success is to some extent illustrated by the Gaetz colony at Mayton. About five families of German Lutherans came from Bismarck, North Dakota to Mayton in 1900, but with the creation of the mission field at Matton became Evangelicals.³⁵

Undoubtedly the Mennonite Brethren in Christ were the most successful in winning new adherents and expanding their church. From the log church in Didsbury, sister churches were gradually established in Mayton, Cremona,

³³Rev. C. S. Finkbeiner, "History of the Northwest Canada Conference" (unpublished manuscript, circa 1940. Provenance: Reverend T. E. Jesske, Medicine Hat), pp. 131-32, 155.

³⁴Canada, Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, 1901, Vol. I, Population, Table VIII; 1911, Vol. II, Religions, Origins, Table I.

³⁵Interview, Alberta Gaetz, Kelowna, 12-5-70.

James River, McDougal, Gore, and Sunnyslope.³⁶ The success of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ church is perhaps best exemplified by the religious school which was founded in Didsbury in 1926. Starting with assets of five thousand dollars the school grew to college size with assets of one hundred and ten thousand dollars.³⁷ For many years the school was under the principalship of Alvin Traub whose family had settled in the Didsbury area before the turn of the century, and who himself became a powerful voice within the Mennonite Brethren, repeatedly urging the change in name to escape the stigma attached to similarly named denominations.³⁸

West of Carstairs was the Old Mennonite church, West Zion, and southeast of Didsbury, the Bergthal Mennonite church. Though a rural congregation, much more so than the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, the Bergthalers were no less ambitious for the religious education of their children and in 1936 the Menno Bible Institute was opened beside the Bergthal Church. Dormitories, a teacherage and more classrooms were added to the original building and the school thrived until the mid-fifties when it failed to acquire the status of a recognized high school. Enrolment declined

³⁶Swalm, "History of the United Missionary Church," Chapter Seven. Jensen, "Mountain View," p. 193 ff.

³⁷"Mountain View Bible College, Catalogue, 1968-69, 1969-70," p. 5.

³⁸Reimer, Alvin Traub, p. 30 ff.

thereafter, until the school closed in 1967.³⁹

The Bergthal and Old Mennonites held to the tradition of the Mennonite, favouring a rural agricultural life. The problem created by a rurally oriented congregation which to a significant extent was forced to segregate itself from the activities of the larger community is especially important in the case of Carstairs. Carstairs with its small population base was made even smaller because it could not expect to draw extensive support from its natural hinterland. Though Mennonites seem to have been members of the business community⁴⁰ there was little in Carstairs which could have been attractive to the Old Mennonites to the west, or to the Bergthalers to the east. In fact the reverse was probably true. It is notable that members of the latter church used Didsbury rather than Carstairs as their market centre, though equidistant from both.

The churches in Mountain View, perhaps more so than in other communities because of the preponderance of fundamentalists, set an unmistakable moral tone. Churches were not only the instrument, however imperfect and in the long run ineffectual, for creating a cultural diversity, but they gave the community a value system. Churches which

³⁹ The Bible school in Rosthern, Saskatchewan then became the educational centre for the Mountain View General Conference Mennonites.

⁴⁰ E. R. Shantz, M. R. Shantz and E. B. Shantz were among the business community (C.J., 16-8-07).

idealized the simple agrarian life, such as the Old Mennonite or the Bergthal Mennonites, obviously directed their young people to continue in such a vocation. Evangelistic churches, such as the Evangelical Association and the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, cultivated an abiding concern for their fellow man, albeit with the ulterior motive of leading him into the paths of righteousness.⁴¹ This type of piety permeated a man's entire life and way of thinking, not merely the Sunday morning service hour.

The churches to a significant extent regulated the social life of the community, encouraging some types of activity and frowning on others. Generally dancing was singled out as being uncouth and, if not sinful in itself, at least an opportunity for sin. The Presbyterians and Methodists in common with the fundamentalist groups frowned on such activity.

The preponderance of fundamentalists and Presbyterians is indicated in Appendix III and IV. The figures do not reflect more than a general trend, and cannot be assumed to reveal the actual number of active church members. However the interest aroused in sumptuary laws, and legislating general conduct, would indicate that a significant sector of the community was concerned with correcting the morals of their neighbours, and held a messianic attitude to life. This sector becomes even more significant when the individual

⁴¹A Moravian Church was built west of Didsbury in the mid-thirties (O.G., 30-8-35).

background of the leaders in such movements as prohibition is considered. Those who fought for the cause of prohibition were in many cases also leading members of the community, both economically and socially.⁴² Their influence in setting a standard and creating an image for the society is paramount, and not proportionate to their actual numbers.

Because it is a tangible event, prohibition probably best exemplifies the deep-rooted moral atmosphere of Mountain View, a conviction that righteousness would prevail, if temptation was removed from the reach of the unwary. The image called up by the term "Bible Belt", as evidenced by the Sunday blue laws, is not incorrectly applied to Mountain View. Prohibition of course was not unique to the west, but part of the North American concern with morality. It is however significant that in the vote taken in 1923 when prohibition was rescinded in Alberta, Mountain View voted prohibitionist.⁴³

⁴²The Craigs in Olds are one example. The Craig family originated in Quebec, four brothers, R. L., S. J., C. G., and W. M., coming west around the turn of the century to set up general mercantile businesses in Olds and later in Vermilion and Banff. In Olds the families were prominent on both the school and town councils. Mrs. S. J. Craig was a staunch temperance woman, and the first convention of the Alberta W.C.T.U. was held in Olds in 1913 to honour her work. She had been vice-president of the Alberta-Saskatchewan W.C.T.U. for two years and then president for five before her untimely death in 1911 (O.G., 21-7-11, 3-10-13).

⁴³See footnote 57 below. Such attitudes linger within a community, and even today the problem of alcohol at public functions is not resolved. A significant percentage of the people remain temperance, and a conflict arises as Alberta liquor laws undergo a general loosening.

Prohibition had long been in the public eye. Many clubs and societies, among them those instituted in the early nineties, aimed at moral reform. The Good Templars were organized in Olds in 1893, with a charter membership of forty, and even though the lodge itself was short-lived, the membership continued to function as a temperance literary society.⁴⁴ Prohibition elocution contests were sponsored regularly. One of the earliest recorded was held in Olds in 1898, featuring recitations by children, and the Didsbury choir and Olds brass band.⁴⁵ Hotels and hotel bars became a ready focus for the moralist eye, and the licensing of the St. George's Hotel in Olds met with a sharp protest, both when the license was originally issued in 1897 and when it was renewed in 1898.⁴⁶ The St. George's was on the main thoroughfare leading to the school and the post office, and since the concern of these reformers was to protect the innocent, perhaps they were not entirely beside the mark in demanding its closure. The hotel was one of the few public centres for recreation, where those who were not part of the intimate family society of either the town or district could spend leisure hours. Prohibition was favoured by such prominent members of the community as Cornelius Hiebert, the M.P.P. for Rosebud, who recommended its implementation to the

⁴⁴C.H., 10-10-93, 12-3-95.

⁴⁵C.H., 14-7-98.

⁴⁶C.H., 19-5-98.

legislative assembly in 1908.⁴⁷

But it was through organized societies that the prohibition issue came to a head. The most diligent workers were often women, and the leading group was undoubtedly the Women's Christian Temperance Union, though the Alberta Temperance and Moral Reform League was equally effective. Though these societies acted as pressure groups urging prohibition, they were concerned with the general living standard in the community. In 1909 the W.C.T.U. in Olds set up a reading room for young men, in addition to sponsoring a literary circle for men and women.⁴⁸ Similarly, to improve the standard of public health, the Temperance Union sponsored a fly-swatting contest in 1916 and 1917. Children in both the rural and town school districts participated, and in the first year they received a bounty of five cents per hundred flies, the giant-killer with the most victories getting a one-dollar bonus. Each Thursday during the month-long contest, the children presented their catch to the Olds school principal for tabulation. Grand winner was an industrious miss from the Samis School who nailed 1,425 flies. The next year the rules were modified slightly, and the flies were simply weighed, bringing a dollar an ounce. The Olds principal, later a senator of the University of Alberta,

⁴⁷L. G. Thomas, The Liberal Party in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), pp. 138-39. Member of the Provincial Parliament (M.P.P.) was the contemporary designation for a representative to the Alberta Legislature.

⁴⁸O.G., 26-2-09.

again had the honour.⁴⁹

The W.C.T.U.'s most significant work was however in the area of prohibition as revealed by the successive provincial prohibition votes. As part of license district number 3, Mountain View worked for a local option vote. Though the vote was repeatedly postponed for legal reasons, it is quite probable that prohibition would have been instituted in large segments of Mountain View, had a plebiscite been held.⁵⁰ For a local option vote to be held in a district, a petition from one-fifth of those who had voted in the previous provincial election had to be submitted to the provincial government. In the Neapolis area east of Didsbury, 75 per cent of the voters were reported to have signed the petition.⁵¹ This figure may be exaggerated, but when the provincial referendum was held in 1915, Mountain View was overwhelmingly in favour of prohibition.⁵² In Didsbury the vote was 231 in favour of prohibition and 33 against, and that evening as soon as the results were known a street parade was held. Led by the Boy Scouts and the town band, the townspeople marched through the streets, their way illuminated by tar-dipped broom torches. The parade ended at the bandstand on Railway Avenue, and after the patriotic

⁴⁹O.G., 12-5-16, 30-6-16, 6-7-17.

⁵⁰C.J., 9-6-11, 7-7-11; O.G., 20-10-11, 14-2-13.

⁵¹D.P., 23-8-11.

⁵²O.G., 23-7-15; D.P., 21-7-15.

singing of O Canada and the Maple Leaf Forever and a congratulatory speech by the mayor, the celebrants went home confident in their victory.⁵³

Prohibition of course was not the success which its advocates had anticipated. Success was more apparent than real. In Didsbury the Rosebud Hotel, opened in 1914, was boarded up early in 1916, then sold and re-opened.⁵⁴ But as one old-timer from Sundre said, prohibition ended three days after the vote was taken. The number of stills and bootleggers was probably no greater or fewer than in other prohibition areas, as evidenced by the number of cases prosecuted. In 1921 the editor of the Didsbury Pioneer simply wrote, "If there is one thing than a bootlegger that causes more excitement in Didsbury, it's an aeroplane."⁵⁵

Yet in the vote taken in 1920, the area voted dry again, by an equally overwhelming majority.⁵⁶ And again in the vote taken in 1923, when Alberta instituted government controlled vending of liquor, Mountain View overall favoured the continuation of prohibition.⁵⁷ Didsbury and Olds returned overwhelming votes for prohibition, and Carstairs was divided almost evenly. In the rural polling centres the

⁵³D.P., 28-7-15.

⁵⁴D.P., 5-4-16, 28-6-16, 12-7-16, 25-10-16.

⁵⁵D.P., 8-6-21.

⁵⁶D.P., 27-10-20; C.J., 27-10-20.

⁵⁷D.P., 7-11-23; O.G., 9-11-23. Olds voted 360 to 114 in favour of prohibition; Didsbury 370 to 89; and Carstairs 123 to 104.

voting pattern changed from district to district. Westcott, Westerdale, Jutland, Waterloo, west of Carstairs, Neapolis, Hammer, Mayton and Berrydale were as staunchly prohibitionist as Olds and Didsbury. Dog Pound, Poplar Creek and Elkton were closer to the Carstairs line. Sundre itself was substantially anti-prohibitionist and several polling areas in the vicinity were not very definite in coming down on the side of the prohibitionists' cause. The poll results of course indicate only a general trend, being no more than a selective sampling. Nevertheless, the issue was not decided locally, and in June, 1924, after eight dry years, the Victoria Hotel in Olds was again licensed.

The wish to legislate morality was not limited to the control of banning of liquor. The town poolhalls were considered dens of iniquity, a place where foul gaming practices, swearing and gambling kept sons from being dutiful.⁵⁸ In each of the railway centres, there was an intermittent battle with the municipal council to institute stricter control.⁵⁹ The end result was sometimes unexpected. One Saturday night in Olds, a number of the prominent and not so prominent young men were arrested in the poolhall after closing hours and charged with gambling. Unfortunately or

⁵⁸In an editorial comment in C.J., 3-12-09, the editor stated that there were only two recreational areas in town for young men: one where they could drink and the other where they could gamble, which is without doubt an oblique reference to the local hotels and poolroom.

⁵⁹O.G., 7-2-08; C.J., 4-11-10.

fortunately, the by-law regulating pool halls was easily circumvented, and the men were released. The town council at its next Monday evening council meeting passed a new, more stringent by-law.⁶⁰

The concern with morality was not the result of any desire to recapture the purity of the frontier, to start a new perfect life, to institute the millennium.⁶¹ It was simply a part of the standards and code of ethics which were evident in late Victorian and early Edwardian society. The stand of prohibition was the natural result of the ethics supported by the fundamentalist sects in Mountain View, and was reinforced by a society which idealized family life. If the voters were asked to support prohibition "[f]or the sake of the kiddies, the women who suffer, the comrades who are down, national purity and prosperity, and a stainless flag",⁶² it was because these were the standards and principles which the society strove for, and which many thought could be achieved through prohibition. Prohibition was not a frontier phenomenon, but an agrarian one. It was part of the basic religious philosophy of the people, and the basic ideals of the times.

SOCIETIES, CLUBS AND SPORTS

The rapidity with which Mountain View escaped the confines of a frontier community can be measured by the

⁶⁰O.G., 3-7-08.

⁶¹Thomas, The Liberal Party In Alberta, p. 162 ff.

⁶²D.P., 20-9-20.

extent and variety of the social life created by 1900 and even more so by 1910. Events formally organized around fraternal lodges, or casually during the winter's lull; clubs centred on the schools or in the churches; social functions which came to be annual events--all these depict a community, not simply struggling for bare existence, but nurturing a way of life by no means void of cultured leisure.

The variety of clubs and lodges, both for men and women, can most readily be explained by the diverse geographic and ethnic origins of the groups that settled in Mountain View. Each, whether from Ontario, Minnesota, Michigan, the Dakotas, or overseas from England, Scotland or continental Europe, seemed to bring its own organizations. The railway towns became the centres for the fraternal lodges and mission-oriented clubs though unquestionably they depended on the farm area to sustain their membership.

The number of lodges is also indicative of Mountain View's embryonic state, still years ahead of government supported public institutions such as existed in more established communities, or became common as government became more socially conscious. Feeling the need for these services and lacking a directed and purposeful social life, the townspeople and with them the rural population relied on private initiative and general goodwill for community endeavours. Just as rapidly but perhaps more so after 1905 they joined clubs with a closed membership or with a particular mission which provided the focus for various overlapping social

circles. The democratic equality supposedly operative in a frontier situation was quickly overcome, if indeed it ever existed, and social levels in both the towns and on the farms were defined, dependent on a man's worth as a neighbour and provider, as much as his business or family connections.

By 1905 the clubs in Olds included a chapter of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Loyal Orange Lodge and the Masonic Lodge, the latter complemented in 1910 by the first chapter of the Eastern Star to be organized in Alberta.⁶³ In 1906, there was a flurry of activity in Didsbury and Carstairs to organize the same fraternities.⁶⁴ The Canadian Order of Foresters was installed in Carstairs before 1906 and by 1910 Olds and Didsbury also had chapters.⁶⁵ The Modern Woodmen of America and the Order of Good Templars were in Olds and Carstairs by then. In addition, perhaps as a reflection of its more American background, in Olds there was also a chapter of the Royal Neighbours of America, and of the Knights of Pythias.⁶⁶ After 1910 the female counterpart organizations of the Masons and Oddfellows were organized. In the early twenties, with the establishment of the Elks Lodges and the end of the prohibition issue, the Masons, Oddfellows and Elks became the most important social groups, organizing much of the community's social activity.

⁶³O.G., 16-12-10.

⁶⁴C.J., 5-1-06, 23-2-06.

⁶⁵O.G., 16-12-10; C.J., 23-2-06; D.P., 12-1-10.

⁶⁶O.G., 16-12-10; C.J., 12-3-09.

Many organizations were part of the growing interest in prohibition, and such groups as the Royal Temperance League, the Alberta Temperance and Moral Reform League, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union were an important element in the community as long as the implementation of prohibition provided a strong cohesive force.

Besides the fraternal orders and the prohibition societies, there were other clubs which catered to special interests. Rifle clubs were organized at Olds in 1902 and later at Carstairs, Didsbury, Harmattan and Westcott as part of the Canadian militia. On a Saturday morning, the men in these clubs would line up at the traps with issue rifles and compete for the bronze medals awarded for the best marksmanship at 200, 500 and 600 yards.⁶⁷

The scouting movement as part of the rising sentiment for Imperial Britain came to Mountain View in the immediate pre-war years. In Olds, the organizational meeting was held in the Anglican church in 1913, and during the war a company of Girl Guides was organized.⁶⁸ The Boy Scouts were successfully organized in Didsbury in 1915, after an attempt in 1911 to organize through the Baptist church had met with little success.⁶⁹ In 1911, however, the Methodist church was successful in organizing both the scouting and

⁶⁷C.H., 27-3-02; D.P., 28-5-13, 30-8-13.

⁶⁸O.G., 11-7-13, 25-12-14.

⁶⁹D.P., 4-10-11, 25-1-11, 10-3-15, 7-4-15.

guiding movement in Carstairs.⁷⁰ Here as in other cases the church assumed more than a Sunday to Sunday role, and provided leadership and facilities where it was difficult to find either elsewhere.

The social life in the towns and in the rural areas was in some respects markedly different. In town it was convenient to have weekly bridge nights, and every Friday or Saturday these small circles met, not quite exclusive enough to miss the opportunity of a grand report in the local paper. Social clubs as well could function for an extended season with assured participation. Didsbury, which may be cited as typical, supported a large number of dance clubs. The Dramatic Club staged quite as many dances as plays, and the chief purpose of the Young Men's Club, the Hop Club and the Dancing Club seems to have been to provide community activity, only incidentally raising funds.⁷¹ Though admission to these functions was by invitation only, there is no reason to suppose that the country belles were not as eagerly sought as those in town, and through the churches and schools there was a good deal of social interaction between the rural and town young people.

In other respects the social life of the countryside and the towns was clearly separate. A thimble tea to which all the ladies were invited to bring their needlework for a pleasant afternoon of gossip over a nice cup of tea, was not

⁷⁰C.J., 14-7-11, 11-8-11.

⁷¹D.P., 2-3-10, 9-11-10, 17-1-12, 11-9-12.

the sort of social function to which most farmwives could devote an afternoon. And neither were the at-homes which any lady of social pretensions held regularly once a month.⁷² It was not solely a matter of class lines, though this undoubtedly played a part. Even with the proverbial western equality, it is unlikely that a homesteader's wife could permit herself the honour of calling on the banker's wife. But distance, rather than social barriers, was the deciding factor. However much the rural women may have desired to participate at these tête-a-têtes, however many of them had previously been accustomed to holding their own at-homes, there was little likelihood that a horse and buggy would cover the distance between Cremona and Didsbury, or Sundre and Olds, for a pleasant half-hour chat.

The farm woman functioned at another social level. It was not until the immediate pre-war years that structured institutions really catered to the social needs of the rural woman. Then through such organizations as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Women's Institute, and the United Farm Women of Alberta, the country woman came to play an increasingly important role within the community, as distinct from her importance within her own family. The war which pushed forward the organization of the Red Cross and other patriotic groups also helped to redefine the social

⁷²For example, Mrs. T. W. Cuncannon, wife of the Union Bank Manager in Didsbury, received on the first Wednesday of the month (D.P., 3-5-11).

role of women and to end their isolation on the farmsteads. Such groups as the W.I. and the U.F.W.A. which functioned within a small geographic area acted in much the same way as auxiliary church groups in larger urban centres. Areas which were merely rural church missions were unable to form united congregations, and the many social groups which were organized through the church could not be established in these areas. Exceptions of course must be made in the case of the rural churches which were built such as those at Harmattan and Westcott, and in the case of the various Mennonite and Evangelical denominations which provided their members with more than a once-a-week preaching-collection service. But even in the post settlements it was the secular organizations and not the church which gave women a place and were able to provide a unifying force within the district, which the many churches tended to counteract.

The cultural advancement of Mountain View is evident in other areas. The founding of libraries is one indication of the rapidity with which Mountain View escaped frontier cultural isolation. Whether a library was simply based on a good selection of books that someone has the forethought to bring west, whether it was part of the reading rooms set up for young men in the towns, whether it was a lending library operated through one of the drugstores or sponsored by a municipal government, whether it was a children's library in one of the local schools--whatever the source of books, they represent the cultural baggage which the settlers

were unwilling and indeed unable to leave behind. The number of literary clubs and debating societies, and the standards these groups set, all attest to a certain educational level and literary interest. A man like Walter Bates who was secretary-treasurer for the Eagle Valley School and councillor for the municipal district for many years, brought west his Ontario school primers including Latin texts and classical literature books. The Reid family in Cremona who, father, mother and sons, held enough degrees to staff a small arts university, is another example of the calibre of education that was brought into the west.⁷³ And whether the books were in English, Norwegian or German, whether it was just the Bible or a dozen other books, no home was without the printed word. Though the educational emphasis was on practical farming, there were those who came from isolated rural areas through the district schools to become professionally trained men and women. The influence of the Olds School of Agriculture in maintaining and upgrading the educational and social standard of the area cannot be discounted.

The cultural heritage was preserved through the many music circles, either orchestras or glee clubs, which sprang up in the towns and around the post settlements. A band was organized wherever there were players with enough enthusiasm and interest to support it, and wherever there was a man

⁷³Jensen, Mountain View," p. 24 ff.

with enough initiative and incentive to direct it. The public support accorded these endeavours arose from local pride, and the general interest good music always seems to create. Carstairs, Didsbury and Olds all had their local bands, as did some district centres such as Westcott-Cremona, Neapolis and Harmattan, and of course there were the small three, four or five-member orchestras which could be found in every district at every community dance. The fundamentalist sects emphasized music in their religious services, and to them must be attributed part of the interest in music, though they would not of course participate in the dance orchestras.

Literary and debating societies on the other hand were acceptable to all faiths. These societies were very popular throughout the long winter months. In almost every district, Friday or Saturday night would find the people gathered at the local school house to listen to a debate, to stage a play, to discuss the Christian way of life, to dance if it were permissible or to gossip with neighbours.⁷⁴ Some of the churches, notably Presbyterian and Methodist, organized young people's groups, such as the one which met at the Westerdale Methodist Church. Here every Friday the young people gathered and the evening programme was divided between music, recitations, readings and a debate. The calibre of these debates was high, and often the more prominent public men in the district, such as H. W. Wood and Michael Clark,

⁷⁴O.G., 13-9-07; C.J., 26-3-09, 13-3-08; D.P., 8-1-15.

would be invited to argue such questions as farmer democracy or free trade. Other topics included initiative and referendum, women's suffrage and, in due course, the navy bill.⁷⁵

Even without the formal structure of a club, community gatherings could readily and easily be organized. The reputation that socials achieved for themselves as light-hearted evenings, full of good natured fun, seems to be backed up in fact. An announcement would be carried in the paper telling the date and the place, specifying the type, be it a necktie, shadow or box social, and inviting the ladies to bring prepared lunches. The annual Christmas Tree in which all the school children had a part painstakingly memorized and breathlessly delivered, was the social highlight of the Christmas season, just as the community picnic on the last day of school was an event to which all, teacher, parents and pupils, looked forward.

Other annual community events required co-operative participation from both the country and the towns, events such as sports days, agricultural fairs, seed fairs and of course the stampedes. The agricultural fairs and sports days were first held in the railway towns but later played an important role in many of the post settlements. The success of these fairs, if they intended to be more than July First Sports Days, depended on the ambition and initiative of the local agricultural societies. Olds formalized its

⁷⁵D.P., 17-12-13.

society in 1899. The purpose of the Agricultural Society was not only to sponsor the local agriculture fair, but to publicize the district through promotional literature and displays at larger regional exhibits. Starting from a small produce exhibit in the railway station in 1900 or 1901, the Olds fair grew into an annual autumn event, attracting large crowds from the surrounding districts.⁷⁶

Didsbury was not slow in following Olds' example, and in 1902 staged the first of its annual fall fairs. Under the auspices of the Didsbury Agricultural Society, the fair grew quickly and in 1911 offered \$2,000 in prizes, the list being the best in Alberta.⁷⁷ Carstairs was not included on the Alberta fair circuit, but instead contented itself with a sports day which in the twenties became a stampede.⁷⁸

In a time period when participatory politics was taken seriously, be it Liberal, Conservative or other, there was always an election campaign to organize and a body of electors to persuade to the proper view. The result was a happy series of social gatherings, picnics, lawn parties and teas, where reciprocity, local option and the farmers' place in provincial government might be discussed by rival candidates, after which the afternoon became a social event.

Entertainment was provided on a commercial basis as

⁷⁶C.H., 19-4-06; O.G., 18-9-08.

⁷⁷D.P., 9-8-11.

⁷⁸C.J., 28-7-11; D.P., 26-7-11, 25-7-23.

well. Businessmen or church groups would sponsor a professional acting company or arrange for the performance of a touring artist. If the advertisement in the local paper had been sufficiently attractive and if the weather co-operated, a capacity house would be assured. Olds, more so than either Didsbury or Carstairs, was the stopping place for these circuit entertainers. Carstairs had some difficulty in maintaining a suitable hall, and Didsbury may have been too close to Olds to make a performance financially worthwhile.

Other forms of commercial entertainment were on a more permanent basis, and these included the movie houses which came to Olds and Didsbury in the pre-war years. Prior to 1911 special shows had been screened in the towns as one night spectacles,⁷⁹ but now for the first time movies became regular fare on the entertainment bill. In Olds a piano warehouse was remodelled, and for fifteen cents admission the most up-to-date shows, wholly moral and with good music, could be seen.⁸⁰ In Didsbury a theatre was opened in one of the business blocks in 1911.

During the war years the Chautauqua made its first appearance in Mountain View. Originating in Chautauqua, New York in the late nineteenth century, it came to be an all-encompassing cultural immersion intended to reach those removed from the metropolitan areas. A Chautauqua company

⁷⁹C.J., 10-5-07, 5-6-08, 26-2-09, 24-3-11; D.P., 29-1-09.

⁸⁰D.P., 9-8-16; O.G., 15-9-11, 27-10-11.

would stop in a centre where a sufficiently large audience would be attracted to its performance. As the Chautauqua advertisements stated, it was "a sort of twentieth century country fair which feature[d] intellect, oratory, music, art and entertainment rather than prize pigs."⁸¹ The performers included well-trained singers and instrumentalists and noted lecturers who discussed world and community problems, and for a nominal price one was presented with an absorbing afternoon's or evening's entertainment. In Olds the company generally stayed for six days, marking the town as part of the advanced tour circuit, while in Didsbury the company staged a three-day performance. Carstairs was too small to be a Chautauqua centre. It was up to the local guarantors to provide financial backing, but a loss of \$1.50 per guarantor in 1919 in Olds cannot suggest anything but the huge success which the Chautauqua enjoyed.⁸²

The summer season which brought the Chautauqua also saw the return of summer sports, and the creek or slough which had been used during the winter for skating parties and hockey games now became a favourite swimming hole or boating area. Some slough-lakes almost assumed the air of a resort. For the Olds district Innis Lake was a popular boating and swimming area, as were Burns and Kievers Lake

⁸¹Mrs. F. L. Klein, "History of the Morphy Family" (unpublished manuscript, Provenance: Mrs. F. L. Klein, Kelowna).

⁸²D.P., 18-9-12.

for the east country.⁸³

Sports were an all year activity, and such team sports as soccer, cricket, baseball and hockey were quickly put on a permanent basis. Using the railway transport to both players and fans, baseball and hockey leagues, commonly called Rosebud, were organized among the centres along the C. & E.⁸⁴ Pick-up games and seasonal tournaments abounded in every rural neighbourhood where a frozen slough or creek could be shovelled off or baselines measured out on a level piece of ground. Besides the team sports organized as much for the spectators as for the players there were individual sports and here again, because of the concentration of population, the towns were able to afford facilities which most rural areas could not. Curling rinks, skating rinks, tennis courts, bowling alleys and even a golf course gradually became part of the towns' social amenities.⁸⁵

But rather than being simply a list of recreational activities, the sports and the clubs and societies supported in Mountain View in some measure reflect the cultural origins of the people. Though in some cases an activity was organized by a few individuals, and thus reflects a narrow

⁸³Photos, Innis Lake, Kievers Lake, Glenbow-Alberta Institute.

⁸⁴O.G., 21-2-08, 29-5-08, 2-5-13; C.J., 9-15-13; D.P., 14-4-20.

⁸⁵See Chapter II; O.G., 29-11-12. The golf course was built in Carstairs in 1922 (C.J., 20-4-22). In the rural areas there were also various forms of recreation facilities including tennis courts at the Eagle Hill Store (O.G., 4-8-11).

grouping not really typical of the district, many of the community activities mirror the English, eastern Canadian and American origins of the settlers.

Olds was the only centre to support a cricket team. Organized in 1894 it continued to operate until the thirties.⁸⁶ There were other hints of the British influence in the Olds area, notably the popularity of soccer prior to the First World War, and the organization of coyote hunts in the style of English fox hunts, though they were of short duration, the rapid settlement of the land curtailing such a sport.⁸⁷ Pockets within Mountain View seem to have been distinctly British, or to have had sufficient numbers to support things British. Derbytown established by the Englishman James Dames, was a British centre and supported such events as a Guy Fawkes Day where a dance and supper followed the traditional burning of the effigy.⁸⁸ West of the Red Deer River an Overseas Club was formed in 1911 and all British subjects were invited to help in fostering Imperial ties.⁸⁹ In Didsbury, notwithstanding the large proportion of non-British, the same club was formed in 1912 with H. B. Atkins as president and H. E. Osmond as vice-president.⁹⁰ Areas which supported an Anglican church may also be assumed

⁸⁶C.H., 6-7-94; O.G., 5-5-21; interview, Allan Botham, Sundre, 12-7-69.

⁸⁷O.G., 29-5-08; C.H., 23-9-91.

⁸⁸O.G., 21-10-10.

⁸⁹O.G., 19-5-11.

⁹⁰D.P., 10-4-12.

to have been English, though the indifferent success of this church should also indicate that the English influence was not extensive.

The American influence as should be evident from the patterns of settlement was more pervasive.⁹¹ The popularity of baseball can be attributed directly to the American preponderance, and there are indications that the American influence was a recognized force within the community. This does not imply that it was in any way lamented. For instance an editorial carried in the Olds Gazette in 1908 stated:

Some of our American cousins objected strenuously to being called foreigners in the same line with the Douks, etc. [sic] Well, we in Canada don't regard the Americans as foreigners. At the rate they are coming into Canada, they will soon be all Canada.⁹²

There are a few newspaper references to very American activities, such as the celebration of George Washington's birthday in the Vale View schoolhouse west of Olds.⁹³ Photos such as the one taken at a Bergen picnic in 1912 where both the Red Ensign and the Stars and Stripes are on display would also attest to the origins if not the loyalties of the people.⁹⁴ There seemed little attempt to foster any specifically Canadian loyalty apart from British Imperial ties⁹⁵,

⁹¹See Chapter I.

⁹²O.G., 14-2-08.

⁹³O.G., 22-2-24.

⁹⁴Photo, Glenbow-Alberta Insitute; original, Mrs. Ira Gamble, Bergen.

⁹⁵C.J., 21-7-11.

and therefore anti-Americanism was virtually non-existent. One recorded incident attacked American economic imperialism, rather than cultural imperialism. Cornelius Hiebert sponsored a series of column-long ads in the Didsbury Pioneer when the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, owned by Rockefeller, flooded the town with oil products at wholesale prices because Hiebert, the local oil dealer, refused to carry the company's products exclusively. Calling Standard Oil imperialist, and a great American Octopus, Hiebert asked for the continued patronage of his business.⁹⁶

Though the long term trend was undoubtedly toward assimilation, at least in language, there were conscious attempts to recognize other cultural groups. In Didsbury both the Jewish New Year and Robbie Burns Day received due comment.⁹⁷ The Chinese, different in both race and culture, were usually singled out for attention, not all equally magnanimous. Though in Olds an anti-Chinese resolution asking the government to impose a \$500 poll tax was passed in 1899,⁹⁸ the Chinese became important and respected members of the community.⁹⁹ Typically, as in Didsbury and Carstairs, the Chinese became restaurant and laundry operators, but in Olds they integrated into the community by accepting a very

⁹⁶D.P., 9-11-10.

⁹⁷D.P., 13-9-07, 31-1-12.

⁹⁸C.H., 2-3-99.

⁹⁹For example, "Yee Sing has sold his laundry business in Olds and returned to China . . . It is seldom that a

North American way of life. The wife of Wong Pond for example, attended the Olds School of Agriculture and graduated in domestic science with the class of 1915.¹⁰⁰ In Didsbury to a lesser extent the Chinese became community members, though the grave marker in Chinese characters in the Didsbury cemetery is not without significance.¹⁰¹ The Chinese in Carstairs, probably because they were associated with a disreputable hotel, failed to achieve the acceptance that a family like the Wongs won in Olds.

Ethnicity of course can be overstressed. The community was making a conscious effort to establish a society of ease and convenience, and each ethnic group discarded all but the dearest of traditions. Yet there is no evidence of a society bereft of cultural diversions, stripped to the bare essentials of subsistence living. People had left one society to establish another ordered on the same principles. Through fraternal organizations, community socials, literaries and sporting events, they built a society of their choosing, but still remarkably similar to any North American rural society of the same era.

Chinaman [sic] becomes popular outside his own country, but 'John' was an exception to the rule" (Olds Oracle, 21-11-02). Later the Wongs in Olds held the same honourable position.

¹⁰⁰ Alberta, Department of Agriculture, Annual Report, Sessional Papers, Vol. VIII, 1914; Vol. X, 1915. See Olds Old Timers Association, See Olds First, p. 237 for a history of the Wong family.

¹⁰¹ D.P., 16-9-14. The grave is probably from the early twenties.

WORLD WAR ONE

If the social activities fostered only a superficial cohesiveness within the community, World One War welded large elements of Mountain View together, at the same time singling out a large proportion as unpatriotic and even alien. It was unfortunate that in Mountain View those who were pacifists were also German, and came under much abuse. Mountain View participated in the war to the extent it felt itself a part of the British Empire, to the extent which the War Measures and Alien Acts permitted and to the extent which the Mennonite religion tolerated.

World War One is often considered the crucible through which the West passed to become part of Canada. It is the turning point not only between Victorian standards and those of the modern age, but the event which removed western Canada from the subservient position of a hinterland for the National Policy, to that of an important if not yet equal partner. Undoubtedly, in Mountain View as in the West, patriotism whipped up by the war effort carried it into a psychological union with Canada. Such patriotism however depended on an already present British connection--the war effort tapped latent loyalty for things British. On the other hand, if there was no dormant loyalty to be heightened and if segments of the community were unable to participate fully behind the cause because of religious beliefs or the requirements of national security, then instead of being a binding force for the community, the war effort became

largely divisive.

Evidence pointing to the divisiveness it created in Mountain View is not difficult to find. Just as the predominantly American ethnic base precluded meaningful support for the Boer War,¹⁰² so the heavily German ethnic make-up of Mountain View prevented uniform support for the war of 1914-1918. Moreover, the net result of declaring those of German origin aliens was to foster poor community feelings. Germans were not able to find self-effacing protection in isolation or segregation. The Germans had not settled in blocs, but were scattered throughout Mountain View, albeit concentrating in certain districts. A town like Didsbury, which was a mixture of German and non-German elements but also had a staunchly British group,¹⁰³ can hardly be said to have cultivated an attitude of toleration. It is in fact in Didsbury and Carstairs that the editorials and newspaper accounts point most concretely to problems encountered by a German-British ethnic mixture.

A brief account of the war effort written locally in 1967 indicated that some problem was encountered with the German sympathizers, but that such behaviour was quickly

¹⁰²The local correspondent to the Calgary Herald apologized for the Olds people who failed to accord a patriotic reception to the train carrying Boer War recruits (C.H., 11-100). Significantly the N.W.M.P. constable was one of the few to volunteer (C.H., 15-2-00).

¹⁰³H. B. Atkins served on the Red Cross and the Patriotic Society while mayor of Didsbury (D.P., 26-8-14, 25-11-14). See Chapter I.

corrected.¹⁰⁴ There were a number of editorials printed as a warning to "German friends", who were asked to refrain from doing or saying anything that might arouse popular feeling against them. In the same breath non-Germans were asked to show some courtesy and understanding rather than "the ignorant intolerance of the bar room loafer and the patriotic exhibitionist."¹⁰⁵ Though it has been argued that the number of Mennonites who joined the armed forces is indicative of their assimilation,¹⁰⁶ the significant factor is not the proportion who joined, but the numbers who did not. Subtle criticisms were made in personal interviews about the young men who remained home in the Mennonite districts, and at a time when many were marching off to war, the hard feelings created can be appreciated.

De-Germanization of Mountain View was carried out in the matter of names. The Berlin School District, which had taken a lead in support of the Patriotic Fund, was renamed Jutland in 1918.¹⁰⁷ Pressure was exerted by various British residents in the district and it was considered unpolitic to resist. There was an attempt to transliterate Bergthal into Mountain Valley, but this effort wore itself out in talk. Because it was not broadcast on a street sign, Berlin

¹⁰⁴D.P., 6-9-67.

¹⁰⁵C.J., 4-9-14. See also, D.P., 30-9-14, 21-10-14, 12-5-15.

¹⁰⁶Sawatsky, "Mennonites in Alberta," p. 64.

¹⁰⁷D.P., 29-3-16; Alberta, Department of Education, List of County Schools.

Street in Didsbury survived.

The socialists were another element within Mountain View which marred the unity of the war effort. The only known active socialist group was centred in Eagle Hill where a local chapter of the Social Democratic Party of Canada was actually formed.¹⁰⁸ Anti-Imperialist and anti-British, this group stirred the ire of the more British elements such as the member of the Harmattan Rifle Club who took time to point out that "the British Empire has been created by men, not socialists and will perchance be maintained by same . . ."¹⁰⁹

The socialists countered with another letter:

We had thought that our "firmly patriotic" gentlemen had already volunteered and gone to the front . . . they are kept from volunteering by a kindly feeling for the unemployed, who have been given a chance of relieving their miseries by becoming "Saviors of their Country"¹¹⁰

Yet with the declaration of war, Mountain View swung into step behind the win-the-war campaign. The Patriotic Society was organized first, with the two members of the legislature, Duncan Marshall and Joseph Stauffer, presidents respectively for Olds and Didsbury.¹⁰¹ Red Cross societies were soon established, some autonomous, others collecting gifts and donations for the Calgary branch. Money-raising functions were held in every school house and in every hall.

¹⁰⁸O.G., 11-9-14.

¹⁰⁹O.G., 2-10-14.

¹¹⁰O.G., 9-10-14.

¹¹¹O.G., 30-10-14; D.P., 25-11-14; C.J., 6-11-14.

Tag days were held at every town and district fair and women's groups sponsored teas and ice cream socials to raise funds. Boys Comfort Clubs were responsible for sending care packages to those mired in the trenches overseas. Funds were raised for the destitute in Belgium and in London and funds were raised for War Loans and Victory Bonds. Even the municipalities allocated tax money for the support of the war effort.¹¹² Though the men overseas bore the brunt of the fighting, the men and especially the women left at home helped as best they could to lessen the sacrifice, and pushed hard for a victory on all fronts. Government policy created and fostered the war spirit. It became the duty of all citizens to participate in the war to the fullest extent--no donation was too small to be appreciated, and no effort too great in matching the sacrifice of the men who were laying down their lives in defence of Canada and her children.

The return of the soldiers brought tragedy in its wake for with them came the dreaded Spanish influenza. If the home front had felt little of the discomfort of war before, they underwent severe hardships within weeks of the armistice. The first recognition of a potential epidemic came with the public notice late in October, 1918 that assemblies were temporarily banned, and with that school instruction, church services, and public entertainments were

¹¹²For example Westerdale Rural Municipality gave \$1,400 to the Patriotic Fund in 1916 (D.P., 26-4-16).

suspended.¹¹³ Gauze face masks became mandatory for anyone coming into social contact with others and, unbecoming as they were, a stiff fine of \$50 was imposed on those who were careless enough about public health to go without one.¹¹⁴ The flu swept through the towns and the countryside with unbelievable speed. One week a notice appeared in the Olds Gazette announcing the postponement of the opening of the Agriculture School for a week or two simply as a precautionary measure. The next week, the kitchens in the school were being used to supply emergency relief to stricken families, and within a month, seventy-one flu patients were under medical care in the school. Emergency hospitals had also been set up in Didsbury and Carstairs as the most practical way of caring for the flu victims and of utilizing the doctors and nurses whose healing skills were never so needed and whose time was never so short. Patients were brought in from Cremona, Sunnyslope and Bowden to these hospitals.

The epidemic passed through two cycles, one peak coming early in December, 1918 and the second in January, 1919. If the war effort had kindled a co-operative community spirit the continuing crisis of the flu epidemic kept it alive. When an entire household was prostrate with the virus, a neighbour could always be found to care for the stock, to look after the children, and if necessary to drive the patients to the emergency hospital. For the school

¹¹³O.G., 25-10-18.

¹¹⁴D.P., 30-10-18.

children facing departmental examinations, lessons were mailed out by the teachers during the two months the schools were closed.¹¹⁵ Young girls and women spent many hours nursing the sick in the hospitals and helping in the homes where a mother had become ill. Although they were paid by the Boards of Health, the risks these women faced in caring for the ill far outweighed any financial reward. The Red Cross was ever ready to help and made pneumonia jackets and gauze masks which sold for ten cents.¹¹⁶ Dr. C. C. Hartman, medical doctor in Olds for many years, wrote of the flu epidemic in later years:

. . . the people of Olds and the surrounding district did so much to help each other. Town and country people formed themselves into groups to make soup and food for those ill at home, groups to see that this was delivered regularly to these homes, groups to bring patients with their beds and bedding to the improvised hospitals, groups to take patients home again, groups to scout the country and discover where whole families were ill with no one to report the illness or look after the necessary fire and chores. The O.S.A. was turned into a hospital from the basement to the top storey and managed with a volunteer staff of cooks, housekeepers and nurses. Available trained nurses were put in charge and the school teachers from the whole district placed themselves under their direction. Order was quickly established and this voluntary organization made it possible for many to get good care and recover, who doubtless would have succumbed without assistance.¹¹⁷

Dr. Hartman's comments were made of the Olds district and are undoubtedly applicable to all of Mountain View.

¹¹⁵D.P., 6-11-18.

¹¹⁶C.J., 25-10-18.

¹¹⁷C. C. Hartman, "A Medical History of Olds," O.G., 8-9-55.

War in Mountain View created as much community feeling as it destroyed. It provided an historic event to which patriotic significance could be attached. But the cost was great, both in number of men which the community lost, and in the division created within the community. The First World War can be considered as a crucible from which a Canadian identity emerged, but only if a rider, the alienation of significant elements of the society, of the community known as Mountain View, is attached.

GOVERNMENT

Government, notably local government, could be expected to supply a focus of loyalty which would foster a feeling of community. But again, division rather than cohesion is evident. First there was the urban-rural split, each being administered separately, except in school affairs where the towns were the centre for school districts 235, 652 and 642, Olds, Didsbury and Carstairs respectively. Assessment in these cases was made on both rural and town property, and the school board was composed of both rural and town members. Generally, however, needs for the rural and town people were different, and the division in administration was perhaps natural. Even though the towns could afford many public improvements because of the concentration of tax money, their obvious dependence on the rural area to maintain economic vitality would indicate that the towns could not afford to antagonize the rural area by outdistancing it socially or economically or by becoming socially

exclusive. Because of the close spacing of service centres and the omnipresence of the store catalogues, only a friendly, helpful spirit would ensure the continued loyalty of the rural buyer. A friendly co-existence was therefore assured.

However, the rural administrative units were small and fractionalized the community. School districts which also defined social units, in many cases forming the limit of a child's friendship circle, were numerous, over seventy being established in Mountain View. Local government units were also numerous, as necessitated by population distribution and the extent of district improvements. The first rural districts were formed to control the movement of livestock and check the spread of animal disease, hence the name "herd districts". Then fire districts were formed to organize the districts, still within the North-West Territories, for better fire protection. Later these were renamed labour and fire districts, again to facilitate fire protection and to pool labour for the building of local roads. Finally among the small local government units came the Local Improvement District, which ranged in size up to seventy-two square miles with a population density of one person per three square miles or later one person per square mile.¹¹⁸ From three to six councillors were elected in each L.I.D. and they set the tax rate and decided what district improvements were most pressing. In Mountain View the L.I.D.'s were

¹¹⁸A. N. Reid, "Local Government in the North-West Territories," Saskatchewan History, January, 1949 (Vol. II, No. 1), pp. 1-13.

created prior to 1909, in some cases before the Autonomy Act of 1905.¹¹⁹

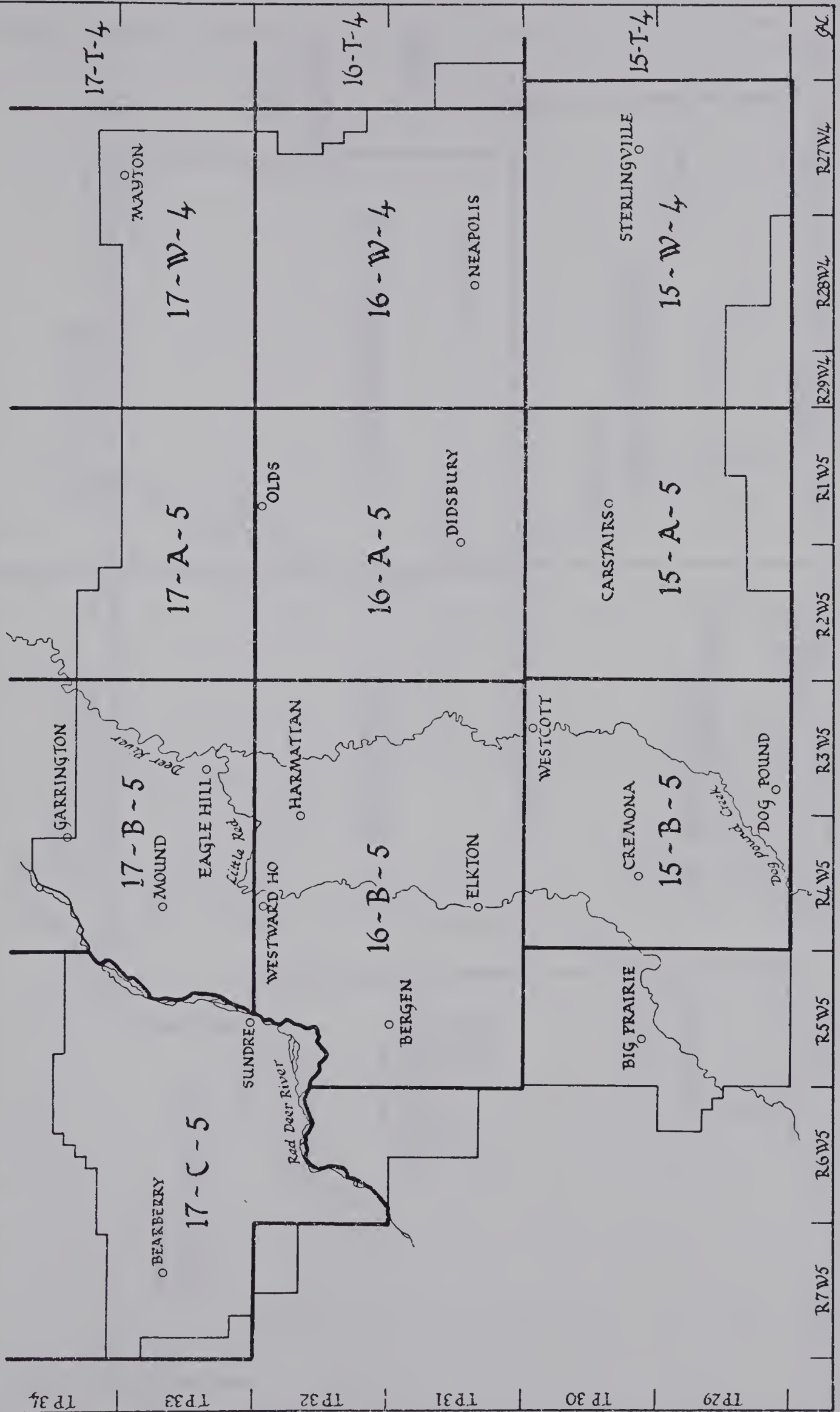
The local improvement district was sufficient as long as the population remained small, but its limited taxing powers and limited size reduced its effectiveness as the rural areas became more heavily settled. Through the 1912 Municipal Act the provincial government encouraged districts to consolidate with others to form a rural municipality. At first votes were taken in the improvement districts to determine the wishes of the residents, but the electors were either too apathetic to vote or too fearful of higher taxes to favour consolidation.¹²⁰ Neither the Didsbury, Carstairs or Sundre areas returned favourable votes, and only the municipal district of Mountain View, number 310, was created in 1912.¹²¹ The response was typical of the rest of the province and, to force the local residents to accept more responsibility for governing themselves, the Municipal Act was amended to allow the erection of municipal districts simply through petition rather than by a general vote of electors. In 1913 three municipal districts were formed: Rosebud, Number 280, consolidating L.I.D. 15-W-4, 15-A-5, part, 14-W-5 and 14-A-5; Waterloo, Number, 281, consolidating 15-B-5, 14-B-5 and part of 15-A-5; and Westerdale, Number

¹¹⁹ See Map No. 5 and 6, pp. 156a and 156b.

¹²⁰ O.G., 15-11-12

¹²¹ Alberta, Department of Municipal Affairs, Records of the Municipal Districts.

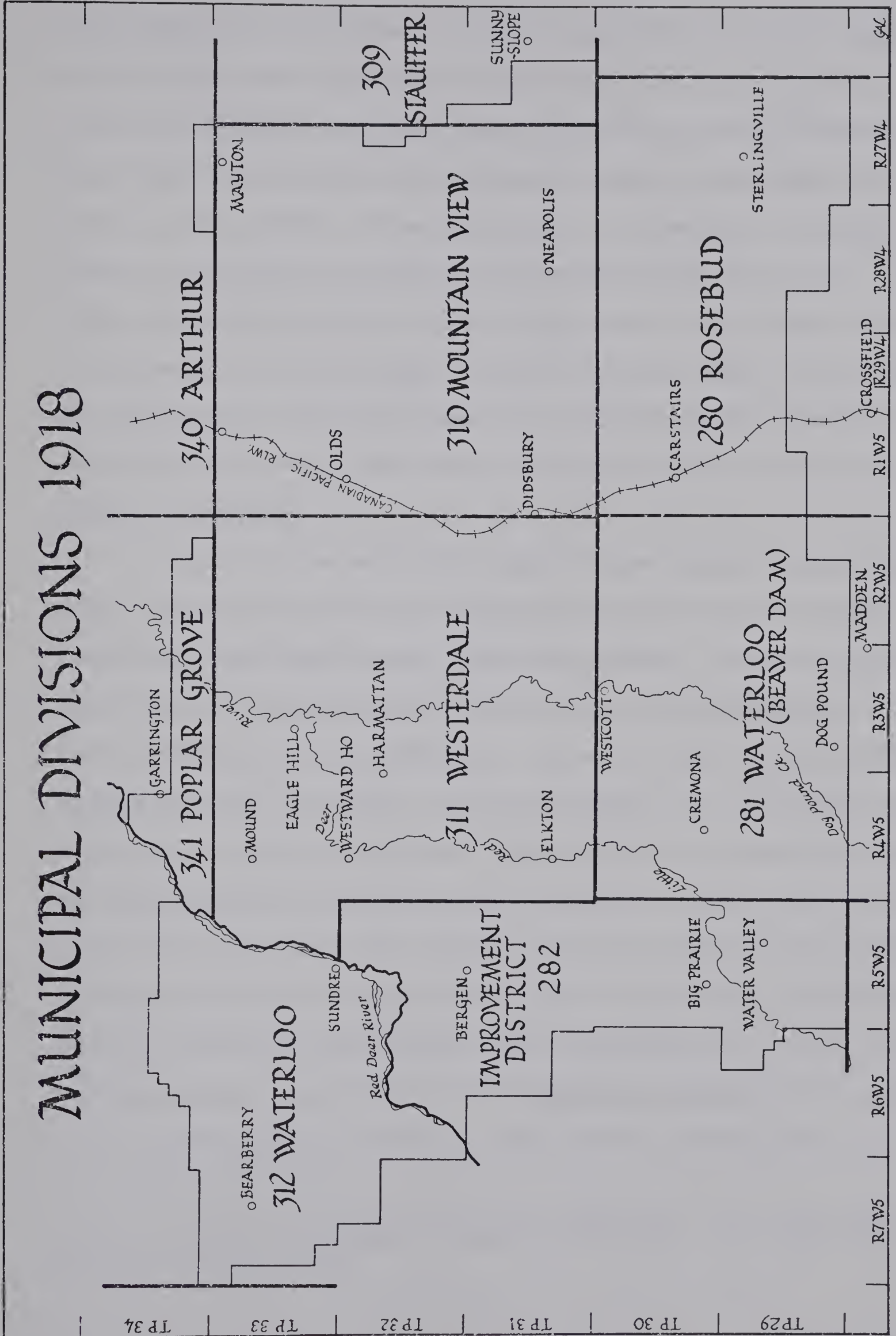
LOCAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS 1912



Map 5

MUNICIPAL DIVISIONS 1918

Map 6



311, consolidating 17-B-5, 16-B-5, and parts of 17-A-5 and 16-A-5. The area across the Little Red Deer River south of Sundre which had previously been outside any local authority was organized into what was termed a large improvement district, numbered 282. The land north of township 33 became part of the Arthur and Poplar Grove Municipal Districts. In 1918, another Waterloo, numbered 312, was formed from L.I.D. 17-C-5 west of the Red Deer River.¹²² These with a few boundary adjustments and with the name of Waterloo 281 changed to Beaver Dam 281 were the local governmental units until the Second World War.

Then as now sectional differences between councillors often came to the fore in deciding the priority of bridge building, road improvement, and job tenders. This was especially true in those municipalities which encompassed more than one town within its boundaries. Inter-village rivalry between Crossfield and Carstairs, both in Rosebud, was the cause of many heated council meetings. The problem in Rosebud was partially solved by alternating the meetings between the two villages, but one full-scale fight broke out when a new secretary-treasurer was to be appointed in 1915. The three councillors for the northern subdivisions, who included H. W. Wood, signed and published a petition in the Carstairs Journal which asked that the position be filled on merit rather than place of

¹²²D.P., 19-11-13; Alberta, Department of Municipal Affairs, Records of the Municipal Districts. See Map 5 and 6, pp. 156a and 156b.

residence.¹²³ Similarly in Mountain View the council meetings were held alternately in Olds and Didsbury.¹²⁴

The antagonism between the railway centres was built up in other ways. Each strove to capture the rural market. Socially, in sports, and even in the war effort, each town competed against the other. Though such competition was supposedly entered in a spirit of friendliness, it is obvious from newspaper accounts and from the personal interviews that loyalty was firmly affixed to the home town and that other centres were regarded as something other than friendly rivals. Such rivalry was aggravated by political constituency boundaries, especially those marked out for the provincial legislature. From 1909, the Olds district formed a separate riding, and was fortunate enough to secure an agricultural school through the efforts of its representative. Federally Olds was part of the Red Deer constituency, while Carstairs was split between Calgary East and West. Didsbury in 1917 was removed from the Red Deer riding and was divided like Carstairs between Calgary West and Calgary East.¹²⁵ Loyalty was not easily transferred to larger units. It was defined within parochial limits, focussed first on the post settlement and then on the market town.

The community identity which emerges is one of

¹²³C.J., 26-2-15. See also, C.J., 13-4-17, 8-3-18, 29-7-20.

¹²⁴D.P., 1-11-16.

¹²⁵Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1917, 1921.

separate, discrete parts, aligned not with municipal governments but following economic and ethnic patterns. Because of the restrictions imposed by transportation and the conscious fostering of loyalty to individual railway towns, a community spirit grew within individual districts. The barrier between ethnic and district groupings was not insurmountable, though in times of stress such as the First World War differences rather than similarities were heightened. Overall was the profound moralistic foundation, bound together with an aspiration to exemplify a Christian life whatever the particular creed. The abiding religious faith of Mountain View as exemplified by the individual strength of the numerous churches is probably typical of most agricultural societies. In Mountain View the towns and the farm area must be considered together, one complementing the other. There were dividing lines, but between the railway centres and the farm there was not the tremendous gap that presented itself between the rural areas and the large metropolitan centres of Calgary and Edmonton. Mountain View fostered a society where education was prized, where family life was idealized, where leisure was cultivated. Mountain View was an agrarian society but by no means uncultured or uncouth.

CONCLUSION

Mountain View in one generation witnessed a development which carried it from a virgin wilderness to a closely populated agricultural community. With the building of the railway between Calgary and Edmonton in 1890-91, settlers began to arrive. Because of the cycle of dry years, and the effect of the economic depression in slowing immigration, only a limited number of landseekers arrived during the nineties, most of whom settled in the parkland around Olds. Later, under the combined effect of promotional advertising by the railway company and the federal government, the return of economic prosperity and the rains, the Didsbury and Carstairs districts were settled. By 1907 Olds and Didsbury were incorporated towns and Carstairs was a village. By this date settlement had proceeded west of the Little and Big Red Deer Rivers, though soil in this area was not suitable for extensive cropping and the farmsteads could not match the prosperity of those east of the Little Red Deer. Settlement came in distinct waves, 1890-1900, 1900-1905, 1906-1912, determined by prevailing economic and climatic conditions, as well as promotional literature distributed in eastern Canada, Europe and the United States.

The better soil areas in Mountain View quickly

became viable farm units. Initially supported by the prairie wool which grew in so much of Mountain View, agriculture developed as a mixed farming economy. Dairying as well as the cattle industry became an important facet of the rural economy. The export of hay and later grain gave Mountain View a healthy economic foundation. In the towns subsidiary processing plants were established, though in Didsbury other types of industry briefly flourished. The post settlements which were conveniently spaced throughout the region provided a more localized and limited commercial centre, and it was here that the district creameries were located, as well as the churches, post offices and often schools.

Settlement was patterned by natural geographic barriers. The Dog Pound and the Little Red Deer Rivers were natural barriers to the west as the open grassland was a natural barrier to the east. Settlers on the other side of these barriers formed separate social groups. West of the Dog Pound, in the Cremona area, affiliation was as much with Cochrane as with Carstairs. In the open grassland, ranching predominated, and farming was more susceptible to the weather conditions of the true prairie. Land on the eastern and especially on the southeastern periphery of Mountain View was susceptible to drought. But the biggest socio-economic division was the Little Red Deer River. Though many of the more educated settled in this region, lured west in the post-1905 settlement period, the land could not yield support above a subsistence level. Economically poor, this

area became socially segregated.

Another pattern of settlement emerges, based on ethnic distribution. The Olds district was predominantly Anglo-Saxon, receiving a large proportion of Americans and eastern Canadians of British extraction. Didsbury became a centre for German groups, first with the colonization by the Mennonite Brethren in Christ in 1894, and then with the arrival of two other Mennonite groups, as well as the Evangelical Association, German Lutherans, and German Baptists. The German-fundamentalist character of Didsbury did not however overshadow the Anglo-Saxon element, and the ethnic traditions and culture were gradually submerged, forced into abeyance by national identity crisis, such as the World Wars, and more recently the Canadian fondness for nationalism. Nevertheless Didsbury was a centre for the Mennonite and Evangelical congregations, though this is not to say Didsbury was solely or even predominantly Mennonite or Evangelical (See Appendix II-IV). Carstairs was within the Mennonite settlement area, though not an integral part of their social or economic patterns. Instead, Carstairs was heavily Americanized, again in the Anglo-Saxon tradition.

Other ethnic groups in Mountain View include the Norwegians who settled west of the Little Red Deer River at Bergen and Eagle Hill. The Foat and Reid colony in Cremona, the Gaetz and Fobes colony east of Olds, the North Carolinian colony in Eagle Valley, the Latvian colony on the James River, all form part of the ethnic mosaic of Mountain View.

While much if not most of the original culture was lost within one or two generations and the tendency was to assimilate to a common standard, the diversity has been reinforced with the arrival of other immigrants. One example for Mountain View is the arrival of the Russian Mennonites in 1923, or again of the British Empire settlers or the war brides. The arrival of individuals or small groupings has maintained some semblance of diversity and multi-culturalism, and it is perhaps not wrong to say that the relevance of Canadian history depends on Canada's ability to accept rather than plough under this diversity.

Through the churches ethnic divisions remained defined, though the lines were not exclusive and were gradually obliterated. Normally, there seemed to be no outright segregation or community antagonism based purely on religious creed. Ethnic prejudices were aroused under the chauvinistic influence of the First World War, and died a hard death. Previously, however, nationalism seems to have been absent and ethnic differences valued rather than distrusted.

Socializing patterns were defined not only by church membership but also through community co-operative efforts. Through activities as mundane as building a barn, a school or a hall, through societies such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Women's Institute, or fraternal lodges such as the Masons and Oddfellows, and, to a more limited extent, through municipal government, other patterns emerge, which cross church and ethnic lines, and evolve into

community units coextensive with geographic or administrative areas. Community units revolved around the school house, around the post settlement and around the railway centre.

The standards of the community were pre-determined by the cultural background of the individual settlers. Most came from well-established and highly organized farming districts. The amenities, both social and practical, found in the towns point out the level of achievement the settlers were striving for. Though school for most rural children dropped to grade eight or nine, the standard of education was maintained to a large extent by the high schools in the railway centres, the agricultural school built in Olds in 1913, and the Mennonite Bible school built in Didsbury in 1926. The interest shown in music, in literature, in world affairs, attest to the overall cultural level of Mountain View, far removed from the primitivism of a frontier.

The railway centres were more cosmopolitan than the rural areas. Yet the leaders in these centres often formed the core of church orthodoxy. In some respects the towns were more secular than the farm region, providing the opportunity to socialize along more formalized patterns which included public commercial entertainment and small exclusive cliques. But the towns functioned as service centres, largely dependent on the surrounding farm districts, and the mores and customs dividing the town and country were only superficial.

The self-made man was undoubtedly idealized, but success depended on acumen and industry and popular acceptance was won through community involvement and concern. The frontier as it existed for Mountain View seems to have been psychological--the ideal of work and industry bringing its just reward. Mountain View was an agrarian society, dependent for its livelihood on factors beyond human control. Without an abiding faith, without the will to live on hope, buoyed up by past success, little would have been achieved in Mountain View. If Mountain View is in the Bible Belt, it is as a direct result of its dependence on agriculture. A common thread united the country to the towns, the regional areas to each other. Perhaps more than anything it was the goodness, innate or learned, of man, his ability to lead or be led in an upright life, and above all co-exist within a Protestant community.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

A local study is based on sources which are specifically relevant to the area. Newspapers were the most important single source and these found in the Alberta Legislative Library and Glenbow-Alberta Institute dated back to 1890. Personal memoirs from Mountain View either in the form of letters or diaries are rare, though copies of several manuscripts written by original settlers are available at Glenbow-Alberta Institute. Interviews of local residents were a most valuable source for information which is priceless to the social historian. Though this source may be questioned as to its reliability pertaining to dates and historic incidents, other facts relating to farming practices housing and social institutions were quite reliable and personal interviews remain the best and, in most cases the only, source for such data. There was little tendency to eulogize the hardships that the first settlers underwent only a quiet pride in their determination. Photographs and other keepsakes that were shown to the author were of great assistance in reconstructing the era of settlement. Glenbow-Alberta Institute acted as a depository for the photos which were of sufficient quality to merit reproduction. Minute books and ledgers kept by local councils were useful though

the gaps in the records and the loss of the correspondence files diminished their overall usefulness. Church records were also deficient in this regard.

Other sources include the family histories that have been compiled covering almost every district within the County of Mountain View. These books are a mine of information though much of it is repetitive and tends to unduly glorify the past as well as resorting to gossip. Standard works provide an introduction to the Canadian west and to Alberta in particular. These include the Social Credit series edited by S. D. Clark, and the Canadian Frontiers of Settlement series edited by W. A. Mackintosh and W. L. G. Joerg.

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Interviews

Interviews were in most cases conducted using a tape-recorder, and notes were later typed from the tapes. Some of the tapes were re-recorded at Glenbow-Alberta Institute. The list of interviewees is for obvious reasons not complete, but gives an indication of the sampling taken. Most of those interviewed are considered old-timers, septuagenarians who have resided in the area for a considerable period. A more complete biographic sketch than that included here can in most cases be found in the local histories listed below.

- Bird, Mrs. Dick. Cremona, August 20, 1970. Sister of Cremona's first postmistress with whom she lived prior to W. W. I.
- Bird, Mr. and Mrs. Lionel (nee Reid). Cremona, August 6, 1969. Second generation farm family.
- Botham, Allan. Sundre, July 12, 1969. Came with parents and family as a young man from England in 1910.
- Bracken, Mrs. Frank (nee Pryce). Cremona, July 29, 1969. Father ranched on Big Prairie in 1892.
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- Clark, Mrs. George (nee Douthwaite). Olds, August 28, 1969. Daughter-in-law of Michael Clark, M.P., Red Deer.
- Cloakey, George, H. Calgary, June 23, 1970. Son of George H. Cloakey, Olds businessman and Conservative candidate prior to W. W. I.
- Cook, Mrs. Minnie (nee Fletcher). Sundre, August 19, 1969. Daughter of Arthur Fletcher, rancher on the Red Deer River Flats in 1894.
- Corless, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin. Sundre, June 18, 1969. Second generation farm family.
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- Dougan, Mrs. Wm. Bergen, August 28, 1970. Scots settler, Bergen.
- Duff, Fred. Olds, February 21, 1970. Son of first station-master in Olds.
- Duncan, Miss Myra. Calgary, May 23, 1970. Settler, Neapolis district.
- Ellithorpe, Ralph. Sundre, August 26, 1970. Farmer-storekeeper, Sundre.
- Epp, Mr. and Mrs. George (nee Neufeld). Didsbury, June 25, 1969. General Conference Mennonites. The Neufelds were part of the Plum Coulee colony, and Mr. Epp was part of the Russian Mennonite emigration in 1923.

- Ericksen, L. P. Olds, June 20, 1969. Field worker, Olds School of Agriculture. Homesteader, Cypress Hills.
- Eskrick, Mrs. M. Sundre, June 11, 1969. Founder, Sundre Round-Up, 1960. Author of numerous articles of historical interest for the Red Deer River area.
- Fessenden, Mrs. Charles (nee Warren). Olds, August 9, 1969. Settler, Westerdale, 1899.
- Foat, Mrs. Mae. Carstairs, August 20, 1970. Farmwife, first generation.
- Fobes, Charles. Olds, July 31, 1969. Part of colony from Ida Grove, Iowa in 1902. Worked on Reed Ranch.
- Frew, Mrs. A. (nee Locken). Sundre, June 26, 1969. Family homesteaded on the Bearberry.
- Fulkerth, J. Didsbury, July 3, 1970. Farmer and horse-breeder, first generation farmer Didsbury.
- Gaetz, Albert. Kelowna, May 12, 1970. Family homesteaded, Mayton, 1900-01.
- Gamble, Mrs. Ira. Bergen, August 28, 1970. Daughter-in-law of the Reverend S. W. Gamble. Homesteaded in Niche Valley after Didsbury fire of 1914 destroyed husband's store.
- Grisdale, Frank S. Olds, July 31, 1969. Instructor in 1913 and then principle of Olds School of Agriculture 1918-1930. Alberta Minister of Agriculture, 1934-1935.
- Haener, Hans. Cremona, August 26, 1969. Rancher, Haener's Ridge, 1912, before he and his brother lost their grazing leases under the Alien Act. Homesteader, Cremona.
- Hammer, William Olds, August, 1970. Second generation farmer, Olds.
- Haug, Mr. and Mrs. Trygve (nee Gamble). Bergen, August 28, 1970. Second generation farm family.
- Hewitt, Matthew J. Cremona, July 29, 1969. Storekeeper, telephone company director, Cremona, after 1930.
- Hickey, Mr. and Mrs. Jack (nee Foat). Cremona, August 6, 1969. Jack Hickey was an adult member of the Foat colony from Wisconsin that settled in Cremona in 1902.

- Hogg, Alex. L. Didsbury, June 26, 1969. Homesteader, Sundre; councillor, Mountain View, M.D.
- Hosegood, Harvey. Didsbury, August, 1970. Family homesteaded, Rugby. Councillor, County of Mountain View.
- Hughes, James. Didsbury, July 12, 1969. Family homesteaded in Rugby area; student, Olds School of Agriculture, 1915-1916.
- Jackson, Harry. Didsbury, July 11, 1970. Second generation farmer.
- Jacobsen, Mrs. John Didsbury, August, 1971. First generation farmwife, Westcott.
- Locken, Hans. Sundre, June 26, 1969. Second generation farmer, Bearberry.
- Lieseimer, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin (nee Turnacliff). Calgary, July 31, 1970. Part of the Liesemers family who were businessmen in Carstairs and Didsbury. Left the area in the thirties.
- McMurtry, Dave. Sundre, August 20, 1970. Son of early Olds' veterinary who homesteaded in the Bearberry.
- Metz, Fred. Didsbury, June, 1969. Family homesteaded east of Olds. Councillor, County of Mountain View.
- Miller, Edwin W. Olds, June 16, 1969. Homesteader, Sundre. Secretary-treasurer, L.I.D. 16-c-5, Waterloo M.D. 312, 1912-1960.
- Moore, Miss Magdalen. Vancouver, September, 1970. Came to Olds as a young girl with her partents, Mr. and Mrs. O. S. Moore who were the town's pharmacists. Played on the Chautauqua circuit.
- Neufeld, Peter. Didsbury, August, 1970. General Conference Mennonite. The Neufelds were part of the colony from Plum Coulee in 1901.
- Niddrie, J. G. Edmonton, winter, 1969, 1970. Son of William Niddrie, rancher on the Red Deer River Flats, 1894.
- Overguard, Mr. and Mrs. Martin (nee Botham). Sundre, June 26, 1969. Homesteaded with their parents north of Sundre.
- Page, Mrs. M. Carstairs, July 4, 1969. First World War One bride from England. Settled in Burnside.

- Pawson, Mrs. A. Cremona, August 12, 1969. Ran Big Prairie Store and post office. Lived on Silver Creek.
- Pekse, Fred. Sundre, July 14, 1969. Part of Latvian settlement on James River.
- Platt, W. J. Olds, August, 1970. Family settled in Lone Pine district.
- Rattray, Duncan. Cremona, August 6, 1969. Settled in Cremona during the depression of the thirties.
- Reid, Mrs. Edwin (nee Foat). Cremona, July 28, 1968. Part of 1902 Foat colony from Wisconsin in Cremona area. Married into the Reid family from Ontario who settled north of Cremona.
- Reid, B. B. Cremona, August 4, 1969. Youngest son of the Reid family from Ontario.
- Robertson, Alex. Carstairs, August, 1971. Son of the Robertsons who ranched at the junction of the Beaver Dam and the Dog Pound.
- Robertson, Mrs. Rose (nee Klinck). Carstairs, August 27, 1970. Daughter of Daniel Klinck who built the Klinck block in Didsbury in 1919. Married brother of Alex Robertson.
- Rodgers, Jasper. Cremona, July, 1969. Worked on Virginia Ranch after W. W. I.
- Ronneberg, Arnold. Eagle Hill, August 27, 1970. Member of Norwegian settlement.
- Ross, John. Olds, winter, 1970. Longterm member of Presbyterian Church, Olds.
- Scott, Mr. and Mrs. Ernie (nee Shackleton). Olds, August 23, 1969. Longterm members of Olds community.
- Shackleton, E. J. Olds, August 23, 1969. Second generation Olds businessman.
- Smith, J. J. Torrington, August 22, 1969. Worked as cowhand for the Burns' ranch around the turn of the century. Family was among earliest in Olds.
- Stone, Mr. and Mrs. Fay (nee Van Duzee). Dog Pound, August 3, 1969. Second generation farmers.
- Tuggle, Norman. Didsbury, August, 1970. Family came from Kansas shortly after the turn of the century and settled in Westcott area.

Warren, Glen. Olds, August 9, 1969. Family settled in Westerdale in 1899.

Winter, Mrs. Chris (nee Dikkut). Olds, August, 1969.
Member of colony from Ida Grove, Iowa in 1902.

Wong, Mr. and Mrs. Frank. Olds, June 27, 1969. Third generation Chinese family in Olds.

Yewell, Edwin. Olds, July 14, 1969. Second generation farmer. Family at one time owned Derbytown store.

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Dean, William. Correspondence, 1952-54. Provenance: Glenbow-Alberta Institute.

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Provenance: Rev. T. E. Jesske, Medicine Hat.

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Provenance: Mrs. F. L. Klein, Kelowna.

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1905-1953.

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1901-1941. Provenance: Town of Carstairs.

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1912-1954.

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Provenance: County of Mountain View, Alberta.

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1908-1947.

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APPENDIX I

POPULATION OF OLDS, DIDSBURY AND CARSTAIRS^a

	Olds	Didsbury	Carstairs
1893-94 ^b	100 ^b	-	-
1901	218	122	20
1906	554	477	297
1911	917	726	270
1916	730	640	348
1921	764	842	328
1926	1,003	778	381
1931	1,056	801	387
1941	1,337	892	371
1946	1,521	980	385
1951	1,617	1,180	468
1956	1,980	1,227	449
1961	2,433	1,254	665
1966	2,999	1,586	761
1971 ^c	3,408	1,878	904

^aCompiled from: Canada, Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, 1961, Vol. I, Part I, Population: Geographical Distributions, Table 9; Census of Canada, 1951, Vol. I, Population, Table 6; Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1946, Vol. I, Population, Table 5; Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1916, Part I, Population, Table III.

^bCalgary Herald, 20-9-93; Canada, Department of the Interior, "Report of Mr. R. L. Alexander, Travelling Immigration Agent," Sessional Papers, No. 13, 1894.

^cAlberta, Department of Municipal Affairs.

APPENDIX II

RURAL POPULATION BY TOWNSHIPS^a

Township	YEAR									
	1906	1911	1916	1921	1926	1931	1936	1941	1946	
29-26 W4	56	153	177	200	209	185	197	155	167	
30-26 W4	129	164	137	205	228	229	251	224	198	
31-26 W4	210	221	179	202	202	243	248	269	250	
32-26 W4	211	171	153	167	180	233	265	319	314	
33-26 W4	158	163	199	160	166	213	253	260	246	
29-27 W4	118	123	195	173	196	186	168	175	169	
30-27 W4	179	198	234	206	239	215	234	196	184	
31-27 W4	223	158	193	200	265	224	221	237	159	
32-27 W4	117	125	88	116	111	173	213	195	189	
33-27 W4	267	272	219	232	238	256	278	279	250	
29-28 W4	137	223	149	144	169	174	171	162	114	
30-28 W4	176	162	167	196	230	289	332	316	297	
31-28 W4	178	167	190	194	240	300	356	292	256	
32-28 W4	132	127	95	116	169	289	330	298	228	
33-28 W4	193	175	170	158	207	168	233	240	196	
22-29 W4 (pt.)	54	110	85	87	118	104	96	79	95	
29-29 W4	96	90	63	84	103	84	100	117	87	
30-29 W4	67	111	84	96	91	92	97	94	109	
31-29 W4	24	31	27	20	42	33	41	34	38	
32-29 W4	47	51	51	59	74	59	46	39	52	
33-29 W4	39	62	61	45	50	67	67	77	57	

APPENDIX II continued

Township	YEAR								
	1906	1911	1916	1921	1926	1931	1936	1941	1946
29-1 W5	217	268	244	214	252	213	250	232	233
30-1 W5	290	360	292	259	262	239	283	266	280
31-1 W5	243	297	290	307	338	295	316	280	250
32-1 W5	178	236	212	376	329	333	326	297	247
33-1 W5	267	201	255	302	308	309	321	312	309
29-2 W5	207	154	148	220	254	293	330	286	280
30-2 W5	260	264	280	291	271	274	279	283	251
31-2 W5	249	232	286	285	235	253	273	290	274
32-2 W5	144	123	155	211	202	217	233	218	169
32-2 W5	209	145	182	259	341	346	308	315	273
29-3 W5	103	97	141	136	163	188	207	228	196
30-3 W5	129	180	189	177	214	234	276	273	210
31-3 W5	161	232	228	260	298	291	306	288	234
32-3 W5	186	236	244	228	249	256	288	274	260
33-3 W5	192	192	199	236	273	330	347	334	300
29-4 W5	137	138	157	193	181	242	289	323	246
30-4 W5	130	108	146	177	154	207	305	298	379
31-4 W5	96	141	142	213	230	244	280	276	256
32-4 W5	107	145	152	168	217	241	328	364	313
33-4 W5	88	85	85	120	132	176	218	228	261

APPENDIX II continued

Township	YEAR									
	1906	1911	1916	1921	1926	1931	1936	1941	1946	
29-5 W5	36	52	90	143	136	170	258	281	240	
30-5 W5	36	57	63	97	117	143	151	183	173	
31-5 W5	32	105	91	99	89	83	133	154	108	
32-5 W5	35	206	65	-	72	73	196	236	243	
33-5 W5	-	-	115	-	47	66	50	73	91	
29-6 W5	-	5	1	26	19	10	13	25	14	
30-6 W5	-	29	4	8	4	5	29	29	23	
31-6 W5	-	9	39	48	59	70	89	75	62	
32-6 W5 (pt.)	-	-	-	-	-	35	73	76	27	
29-7 W5	-	2	-	-	4	1	1	4	-	
30-7 W5	-	9	9	6	6	3	7	8	7	
31-7 W5	3	37	7	-	-	-	3	14	2	

^aCompiled from: Canada Bureau of Statistics, Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1946, Census of Alberta, Table 7. Census figures for 1901 were based on large rural tracts which include both the urban and rural population: Olds, 338,199 acres contained 287 families; Didsbury, 168,773 acres, 121 families; Dog Pound, 273,600 acres, 14 families; Carstairs, 204,800 acres, 49 families; Beaver Dam, 195,567 acres, 24 families; Little Red Deer, 707,024 acres, 18 families; Rosebud, 576,000 acres, 22 families (Canada Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, 1901, Volume I, Population, Table VII).

APPENDIX III

POPULATION OF OLDS, DIDSBURY AND CARSTAIRS CLASSIFIED
ACCORDING TO PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS^a

Religion	Year	Olds*		Didsbury*		Carstairs*	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Anglican	1901	125	10.2	4	.7	11	6.6
	1911	102	11.1	76	10.5	29	10.7
	1921	93	12.2	93	11.0	30	9.1
Baptists	1901	79	6.4	18	3.3	5	3.0
	1911	82	8.9	71	9.8	4	1.5
	1921	81	10.6	32	3.8	25	7.6
Evangelical Association	1901	Not Listed		Not Listed		Not Listed	
	1911	"	"	"	"	"	"
	1921	-	0	109	12.9	6	1.8
Lutheran	1901	-	0	-	0	7	4.2
	1911	70	7.6	18	2.5	8	3.0
	1921	21	2.8	36	4.3	12	3.6
Mennonites	1901	37	3.0	364	65.8	59	35.5
	1911	-	0	59	8.1	2	.7
	1921	-	0	106	12.6	-	0
Methodists	1901	332	27.1	28	5.1	19	11.4
	1911	387	42.2	93	12.8	65	24.1
	1921	260	34.0	78	9.3	99	30.2
Presbyterians	1901	350	28.5	41	7.4	56	33.7
	1911	233	25.3	181	24.9	137	50.7
	1921	276	36.1	272	32.3	120	36.6
Roman Catholics	1901	68	5.5	2	.4	2	1.2
	1911	20	2.3	47	6.5	16	5.9
	1921	23	3.0	33	3.9	18	5.5
All Others	1901	235	19.2	96	17.3	7	4.2
	1911	23	2.5	181	24.9	9	3.4
	1921	10	1.3	83	9.9	18	5.3

*Figures for 1911, 1921 are for the actual townsite; for 1901 include the surrounding rural district.

^aCompiled from: Canada, Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, 1901, Vol. I, Population, Table X; Census of Canada, 1911, Vol. II, Religions, Origins, Table II, Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. I, Population, Table 38.

APPENDIX IV

1921 POPULATION OF RURAL DISTRICTS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS^a

	Rosebud Dist. 280		Beaver Dam Dist. 281		Local Improve- ment Dist. 282		Mountain View Dist. 210		Westerdale Dist. 311		Waterloo Dist. 312	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total Pop- ulation	1,935	100	1,524	100	427	100	2,125	100	1,980	100	753	100
Adventist	23	1.2	11	.7	-	0	43	2.0	27	1.3	8	1.1
Anglican	243	12.5	253	16.6	101	23.7	260	12.2	279	14.0	125	16.6
Baptist	99	5.2	102	6.7	16	3.8	133	6.3	170	8.6	75	10.0
Evangelical Association	13	.6	86	5.6	-	0	110	5.2	63	3.2	5	.7
Lutheran	99	5.1	130	8.5	64	15.0	236	11.1	233	11.8	170	22.6
Mennonite	120	6.2	112	7.4	9	2.1	152	7.2	53	2.7	5	.7
Methodist	413	21.4	291	19.1	53	12.4	503	23.7	427	21.6	128	17.0
Presbyter- ian	639	33.0	379	24.9	76	17.8	409	19.2	405	20.4	174	23.1
Roman Catholic	187	9.7	102	6.7	48	11.2	107	5.0	94	4.7	41	5.4
Other	99	5.1	58	3.8	60	14.0	172	8.1	229	11.7	22	2.8

^aCompiled from: Canada Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. 1, Population, Table 38.

APPENDIX V

POPULATION OF OLDS, DIDSBURY AND CARSTAIRS CLASSIFIED
ACCORDING TO PRINCIPAL ORIGINS--1911, 1921^a

Origin	Year	Olds		Didsbury		Carstairs	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
BRITISH							
English	1911	259	28.2	148	20.4	84	31.1
	1921	247	32.3	171	20.3	116	35.4
Irish	1911	180	19.6	84	11.6	39	14.4
	1921	152	19.9	130	15.4	70	21.3
Scotch	1911	231	25.2	111	15.2	87	32.3
	1921	186	24.3	115	13.7	57	17.4
FRENCH	1911	7	.8	10	1.4	6	2.2
	1921	16	2.1	24	2.9	6	1.8
DUTCH ^b	1911	3	.3	10	1.4	1	.4
	1921	36	4.7	69	8.2	11	3.4
GERMAN ^b	1911	102	11.1	248	34.2	24	8.9
	1921	24	3.1	162	19.2	43	13.1
RUSSIAN	1911	-	0	-	0	-	0
	1921	1	.1	45	5.3	1	.3
SCANDINAVIAN	1911	57	6.2	12	1.6	2	.7
	1921	59	7.7	50	6.0	9	2.7
CHINESE & JAPANESE	1911	10	1.1	5	.7	6	2.2
	1921	15	2.0	8	1.0	10	3.0
OTHERS ^c	1911	68	7.4	98	13.4	21	7.7
	1921	43	5.6	68	8.0	5	1.6

^aCompiled from: Canada, Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, 1911, Vol. II, Religions, Origins, Table VII; Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. I, Population, Table 27.

^bSignificance of the German and Dutch census figures is discussed by Hugo L. P. Stibbe in "The Distribution of Ethnic Groups in Alberta, Canada, According to the 1961 Census" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1966), pp. 46, 75-76. Mr. Stibbe suggests that a significant proportion of those listed as German in 1911 preferred the designation Dutch in 1921, as a result of W. W. I anti-German feelings. Because of their repeated European migrations, Mennonites could report themselves as Dutch or German. I would further contend that the increase in the Russian grouping from 1911

APPENDIX V continued:

to 1921 would indicate this to be an alternative to Dutch, 1921 pre-dating the post-revolutionary Mennonite emigration from Russia. People were probably more likely to switch in Olds rather than Didsbury.

^CThe category "OTHERS" includes Ukrainian, Polish, Italian, Indian, Austrian, as well as the designation "Unspecified" used on the census tables.

APPEADIX VI

1921 POPULATION OF RURAL DISTRICTS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO PRINCIPAL ORIGINS^a

	Rosebud Dist. 280		Beaver Dam Dist. 281		Local Improve- ment Dist. 282		Mountain View Dist. 210		Westerdale Dist. 311		Waterloo Dist. 312	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total Pop- ulation	1,935	100	1,524	100	427	100	2,125	100	1,980	100	753	100
BRITISH												
English	679	35.1	507	33.3	136	31.9	593	27.9	630	31.8	273	36.3
Irish	239	12.3	286	18.8	48	11.2	343	16.1	253	12.8	69	9.2
Scotch	425	22.0	258	16.9	67	15.7	309	14.5	378	19.1	128	17.0
FRENCH	51	2.6	8	.5	23	5.4	23	1.1	54	2.7	32	4.2
DUTCH	55	2.8	161	10.6	13	3.0	98	4.6	53	2.7	26	3.5
GERMAN	237	12.2	190	12.5	48	11.2	465	21.9	245	12.4	62	8.2
RUSSIAN	79	4.1	7	.5	2	.5	30	1.4	47	2.4	21	2.8
SCANDINAVIAN	101	5.2	68	4.5	82	19.2	158	7.4	196	9.9	91	12.1
OTHERS	69	3.6	39	2.5	8	1.9	106	5.0	124	6.3	51	6.8

^aCompiled from: Canada Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. I, Population, Table 27.

APPENDIX VII

THE MENNONITE HISTORY OF DIDSBURY

Aron Sawatsky in "The Mennonites of Alberta and Their Assimilation" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1964), implies that Didsbury was a Mennonite town, and that the Mennonites were the leaders of the community's secular and non-secular affairs, gaining control of the town by being its initial settlers.¹ In order to support such a contention Sawatsky assumes that the town developed with the arrival of the first settlers, an assumption that is not supported by evidence.² However, a general description of Didsbury in 1896 states that the population of the rural district was seventy-two, but makes no mention of any development of a town apart from the immigrant shed.³ The first commercial concern was a store established by a non-Mennonite named Robertson in 1898.⁴ Further development came with the influx of a mixed settlement group around the turn of the century, and in 1903 a list of businessmen in Didsbury is predominantly non-Mennonite. M. Barrett ran the Alexandra Hotel;

¹Sawatsky, pp. 45, 50.

²*Ibid*, p. 27, "The next few years saw the arrival of more Mennonites from the east and the establishment of the town of Didsbury."

³C.H., 4-6-96.

⁴C.H., 28-7-98.

B. Kenney, the saddlery; Brodie, the pharmacy; Kirkpatrick, the lumber yard; A. J. Lapworth, a house painting shop; F. Goard, a jewellery store; Smith, a general store; D. C. Corbitt and Son, another general store; Cooper Bros., a dry-goods; Wm. Liesemer, a hardware and farm machine agency; C. Hiebert, a lumber yard; Weiker Bros., a meat market; O. W. Hembling, was a contractor; J. G. Riddle and G. B. Sexsmith, were auctioneers; and C. L. Peterson, a notary public.⁵ The more correct hypothesis would seem to be that the initiative for commercial development came from non-Mennonites, and that Mennonites entered the business community as they gained capital and acumen. An exception can be made in the case of Cornelius Hiebert who had wide business experience and had accumulated capital prior to coming to Didsbury in 1901. However, his position in the Mennonite church is not clearcut.

Moreover, Sawatsky does not appear to have had access to the church rolls, and therefore is probably depending on common family names and common knowledge to identify Mennonites. The General Conference have a private cemetery, but the Mennonite Brethren in Christ used the Didsbury cemetery. Such sources are misleading, since conversion to other faiths, the ultimate in assimilation, was not unknown. For example, the Lackners, from a Mennonite background, joined

⁵D.P., 13-2-03, 30-10-03.

the Anglican and Presbyterian churches.⁶ Joseph E. Stauffer who is used repeatedly by Sawatsky as an example of Mennonite influence, is listed as a Presbyterian in Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1912.

Some of Sawatsky's examples of the Mennonite business involvement are also misleading. For example, the store opened by George Peters in 1906, was a failure, and was sold in 1910.⁷ Though the Mennonites were instrumental in setting up secondary industry, most of these floundered when the buoyant economy of the settlement period passed. The one successful firm, Weber's Maple Leaf Mills, can hardly be cited as a Mennonite concern, since following the fire of 1910, it was rebuilt with the financial backing of non-Mennonites, and soon came under the control of some Calgary financiers.⁸ Many of the industries supported by the Mennonites are not so much an example of their assimilation, but of their customary self-sufficiency. Such self-sufficiency cannot be held to be a contradiction to church doctrine or customs, not even among the strictest of the sects such as the Holdemanites in Linden, or the prosperous Mennonite communities in Manitoba. Many of the examples cited by Sawatsky are of industries related directly to agriculture and the processing of farm produce--a very Mennonite occupation.

⁶See footnotes 100, 102, Chapter II.

⁷Sawatsky, p. 47; D.P., 12-1-10, 19-1-10. Peters requested those who owed him money to settle their debts as he was "hard up".

⁸Footnote 89, Chapter II.

The Board of Trade on which the Mennonites were said to be very influential, met with short success.⁹ The overriding influence of the Mennonites in the Agricultural Society as claimed by Sawatsky is offset by that of H. B. Atkins who remained secretary for seven years prior to 1912, and organized a most successful succession of fairs.¹⁰

Sawatsky implies that the Mennonite sects in varying degrees remained Mennonites. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ spearheaded by Alvin Traub in fact were trying to sever their Mennonite ties by changing their name.¹¹ Their interest was in evangelism, and it was necessary to become wholly identified with the prevailing norm. The line between assimilation and rejection of the Mennonite background seems thin, but it should be drawn if one is concerned with the acculturation of a people. Finally the census figures of the town itself would not support Sawatsky's contention that Didsbury was a Mennonite town (See Appendix III). That there was a significant porportion of the rural area settled by Mennonites cannot be disputed, though how much leadership they exerted is open to question.

I am not disputing the theme of Sawatsky's thesis, that the Mennonites became part of the small town business

⁹See p. 72 above.

¹⁰MacRae, History of Alberta, Vol. II, p. 746; C.J., 8-6-17.

¹¹Earl Reimer, Alvin Traub, Iron Will and Silver Hammer (Elkhart, Indiana: Bethel Publishing Company, circa 1960).

community. I am contending that because he was solely concerned with the Mennonites, Sawatsky has emphasized their position to the exclusion of other groups, and thus presents a distorted picture of Didsbury which was really a composite of various groups, none of which can safely be said to have held the forefront. In light of the past history of the Mennonites represented in Alberta, assimilation was predictable. Sawatsky seems unaware of the pre-1900 history of Didsbury, which has lead to unfounded assumptions. He fails to make an adequate assessment of the individual importance of the examples he cites in relation to the overall community. The disadvantage of ethnic history is put in relief: distortions are inevitable when the centre of interest is one group which thus becomes dismembered from the whole framework.

APPENDIX VIII

SCHOOL DISTRICTS LISTED BY DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT^a

School District Name & No.	Date of Establishment
Olds Public S.D. #235	June 17, 1892 (North-West Territories <u>Gazette</u> , 9-14-92)
Hainstock Public S.D. #310	March 16, 1894 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> , 11-7-94)
Dog Pound Creek Public S.D. #377	April 22, 1895 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 12-10-95)
Change of Name: Harmattan S.D. #377	August 14, 1903 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 20-5-03)
Westerdale S.D. #377	April 14, 1920 (Alberta <u>Gazette</u> , 16-8-20)
Berrydale Public S.D. #409	March 14, 1896 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 13-7-96)
Rosebud Public S.D. #491	March 27, 1899 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 16-6-99)
Bennett Public S.D. #526	January 4, 1900 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 17-2-00)
Lone Pine Public S.D. #579	January 10, 1901 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 18-2-01)
Waterloo Public S.D. #598	April 23, 1901 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 18-9-01)
Carstairs S.D. #642	October 29, 1901 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 18-22-01)
Grand Centre Public S.D. #643	November 1, 1901 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 18-22-01)
Change of Name: Dieppe S.D. #643	April 27, 1953 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 49-9-53)
Springside S.D. #648	December 6, 1901 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 18-23-01)
Gore S.D. #650	December 17, 1901 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 18-24-01)
Didsbury S.D. #652	December 27, 1901 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 18-24-01)

^aCompiled from: List supplied by Alberta, Department of Education, 1969.

APPENDIX VIII continued:

School District Name & No.	Date of Establishment
York S.D. #653	December 27, 1901 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 18-24-01)
Hammer S.D. #680	March 7, 1902 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 19-5-02)
Coburn S.D. #704	May 30, 1902 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 19-10-02)
Westward Ho. S.D. #718	July 25, 1902 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 19-14-02)
Change of Name: Westcott S.D. #718	March 23, 1917 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 13-6-17)
Greenwood S.D. #723	August 13, 1902 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 19-15-17)
Samis S.D. #733	September 8, 1902 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 19-17-02)
May City S.D. #735	September 8, 1902 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 19-17-02)
Mayton S.D. #743	October 2, 1902 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 19-19-02)
Sunnyslope S.D. #753	November 14, 1902 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 19-21-02)
Friedensaw S.D. #761	November 27, 1902 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 19-22-02)
Change of Name: Berlin S.D. #761	May 9, 1904 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 21-9-04)
Jutland S.D. #761	August 14, 1918 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 14-16-18)
New Bergthal S.D. #799	January 13, 1903 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 20-1-03)
Mowers S.D. #780	January 13, 1903 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 20-1-03)
Harrison S.D. #784	January 13, 1903 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 20-1-03)
Change of Name: Harmattan S.D. #784	May 14, 1925 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 21-10-25)
Clover Mount S.D. #811	March 13, 1903 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 20-5-03)

APPENDIX VIII continued:

School District Name & No.	Date of Establishment
Poplar Creek S.D. #812	March 13, 1903 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 20-5-03)
Burnside S.D. #828	April 24, 1903 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 20-8-03)
Tan'y Bryn S.D. #907	October 23, 1903 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 20-20-03)
Waterside S.D. #946	January 14, 1904 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 21-1-04 & 21-4-04)
Banner S.D. #1070	July 27, 1904 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 21-15-04)
Zella S.D. #1078	August 8, 1904 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 21-16-04)
Adkins S.D. #1136	November 4, 1904 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 21-21-04)
Change of Name: Atkins S.D. #1136	April 3, 1920 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 16-7-20)
Cremona S.D. #1136	April 6, 1945 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 41-8-45)
Hawkeye S.D. #1146	November 26, 1904 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 21-23-04)
Eagle Valley S.D. #1164	December 21, 1904 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 22-1-04)
Melvin S.D. #1206	February 11, 1905 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 22-4-05)
Rugby S.D. #1256	April 4, 1905 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 22-8-05)
Ardmore S.D. #1265	April 12, 1905 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 22-8-05)
Change of Name: Westward Ho S.D. #1265	March 23, 1917 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 13-6-17)
West Hope S.D. #1303	May 11, 1905 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 22-10-05)
Siebertville S.D. #1323	June 6, 1905 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 22-11-05)

APPENDIX VIII continued:

School District Name & No.	Date of Establishment
Bancroft S.D. #1362	July 25, 1905 (N.W.T. <u>Gaz.</u> 22-15-05)
Change of Name: Midway S.D. #1362	October 13, 1955 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 51-20-55)
Rodney S.D. #1410	October 11, 1905 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 1-1-05)
Change of Name: Davies S.D. #1410	February 12, 1953 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 49-4-53)
Eagle Hill S.D. #1448	December 27, 1905 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 1-5-05)
Jackson S.D. #1492	May 10, 1906 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 2-9-06)
Davis S.D. #1581	November 26, 1906 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 2-22-06)
Betchton S.D. #1596	January 28, 1907 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 3-2-07)
Green Acres S.D. #1613	March 25, 1907 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 3-6-07)
Elkton S.D. #1635	May 13, 1907 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 3-9-07)
Fallen Timber S.D. #1680	August 13, 1907 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 3-16-07)
Davenport S.D. #1689	August 24, 1907 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 3-16-07)
Vale View S.D. #1756	January 23, 1908 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 4-2-08)
Bergen S.D. #1823	May 26, 1908 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 4-10-08)
Neapolis S.D. #1897	November 12, 1908 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 4-21-08)
Garfield S.D. #1954	March 24, 1909 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 5-6-09)
Mount Hope S.D. #1961	April 10, 1909 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 5-7-09)
Rockwood S.D. #2103	January 24, 1910 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 6-2-10)
Innis Lake S.D. #2237	July 25, 1910 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 6-14-10)

APPENDIX VIII continued:

School District Name & No.	Date of Establishment
Ennerdale S.D. #2252	August 8, 1910 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 6-15-10)
Boston S.D. #2282	September 23, 1910 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 6-18-10 & 6-19-10)
McDougal Flat S.D. #2319	November 25, 1910 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 6-22-10)
Big Prairie S.D. #2362	February 9, 1911 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 7-3-11)
Lobley S.D. #2673	March 11, 1912 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 8-5-12)
Butuma S.D. #2856	November 25, 1912 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 8-22-12)
Change of Name: Bituma S.D. #2856	May 23, 1913 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 9-10-13)
Graham S.D. #2945	April 10, 1913 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 9-7-13)
Eidswold S.D. #2990	June 10, 1913 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 9-11-13)
Bearberry S.D. #3118	April 11, 1914 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 10-8-14)
Elmwood S.D. #3374	June 24, 1916 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 12-14-16)
Sundre S.D. #3848	August 8, 1919 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 15-15-19)
Change of Name: Sundre East S.D. #3848	July 5, 1943 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 39-13-43)
Bryon S.D. #3874	September 22, 1919 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 15-18-19)
Dog Pound S.D. #3897	January 15, 1920 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 16-2-20)
Water Valley S.D. #3948	June 18, 1920 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 16-12-20)
Inverness S.D. #3986	October 12, 1920 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 16-20-20)
Sunberry Valley S.D. #4049	August 2, 1921 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 17-15-21)

APPENDIX VIII continued:

School District Name & No.	Date of Establishment
Meadowside S.D. #4216	April 9, 1925 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 21-7-25)
Reed Ranch S.D. #4239	February 15, 1926 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 22-4-26)
Huntcliff S.D. #4260	August 4, 1926 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 22-15-26)
Eagle Point S.D. #4394	February 19, 1929 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 25-4-29)
Change of Name: Sundre S.D. #4394	July 5, 1943 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 39-13-43)
Mona S.D. #4441	August 19, 1929 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 25-16-29)
Red Deer Valley S.D. #4670	February 20, 1935 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 31-4-35)
Pinecroft S.D. #4753	December 22, 1936 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 32-24-36)
Sangro S.D. #5045	May 15, 1955 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 51-10-55)
Coal Camp S.D. #5136	May 25, 1961 (Alta. <u>Gaz.</u> 57-11-61)

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